

Jewish settler fires on Palestinians

NABLUS (AP) — Three Palestinian students said an Israeli man opened fire on them, wounding a teenage companion, as they walked to school Sunday in the West Bank. Sixteen-year-old Yasser Snobar was hospitalized at Rafidiyah hospital in Nablus in fair condition with a gunshot wound to his back and stomach, a hospital worker said. Palestinian and Israeli police said they were investigating the reports. The students said they were walking to school Sunday morning on the main road in the village of Sawiyeh, near Nablus, when they heard gunfire and saw Snobar fall to the ground, blood streaming from his back. "We got him into a car and took him to hospital," said one student. After the shooting, the students said they saw a man pulling away in a car with yellow Israeli license plates. Initial reports on Israeli Radio said several students were wounded and that some students had apparently been killed. The radio later backed off its report, however, saying only that the hospitalized student said he had been shot.

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31-member Kabariti cabinet is sworn in

Parliamentary base in government raised to 22 deputies from 17; ten deputies leave while 15 others join seven who stay on

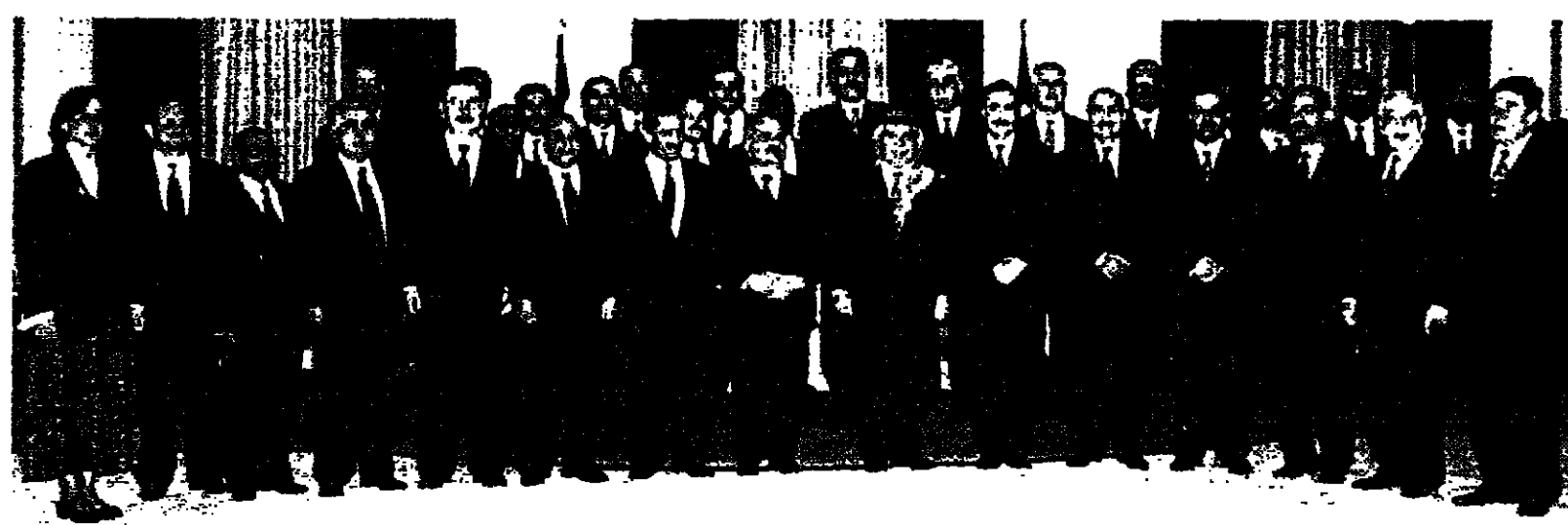
Kabariti retains foreign affairs; Awad replaces Jardaneh; Abul Ragheb and Khalaf keep their portfolios; Khleifat takes over interior affairs; Kavar moves to water and Irsheidat to tourism

By Nermeen Murad
 Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — His Majesty King Hussein yesterday swore in a 31-member predominantly parliamentary government headed by Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti, who also kept the portfolios of foreign affairs and defence.

About two thirds of the Cabinet members entered the government for the first time, including leftists but no Islamists. In addition to Mr. Kabariti, who represents Agaba in the Lower House of Parliament, 21 members of the Cabinet are deputies in the House as opposed to 17 in the outgoing government of Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker.

With a Parliament majority government, Mr. Kabariti is assured of a safe passage through a parliamentary vote of confidence. Although his parliamentary base draws heavily on the centrist blocs that form the majority of the House, Mr. Kabariti included a leftist deputy, Mustafa Shneikat, as minister of agriculture. There are only four



His Majesty King Hussein and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan with the new cabinet of Prime Minister Abdul Karim Al Kabariti

leftists in the 80-member House.

The influential bloc of Islamists (16 members who belong to the Islamic Action Front) did not join Mr. Kabariti's Cabinet but nevertheless had to the new premier, in a consultation meeting Saturday, that while its members would not vote in

support of the new government negotiations and consultations over the past two days between Mr. Kabariti and parliamentary blocs shifted the emphasis in the government make-up to a Parliament majority Cabinet to save the day for an equally important task that Mr. Kabariti intended while forming his

Cabinet. Among those retaining in jobs were Health Minister Aref Bataineh (deputy from Irbid), Planning Minister Rima Khalaf, Minister of Industry and Trade Ali Abul Ragheb (deputy from Amman), Minister of Post and Telecommunications Jamal Sarairoh (deputy from

Karak), and Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Abdul Salam Al Abbadi. Also two serving ministers switched portfolios: Transport Minister Samir Kavar (deputy from Salt) moved to water and irrigation to replace Saleh Irsheidat (deputy

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Following is the list of the new Cabinet:

1. Abdul Karim Alawi Kabariti — Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Defence;
2. Abdullah Ensour — Minister of Higher Education;
3. Awad Khleifat — Minister of Interior;
4. Abdul Hadi Al Majali — Minister of Public Works and Housing;
5. Abdul Karim Al Dughmi — Minister of Justice;
6. Jamal Sarairoh — Minister of Post and Communications;
7. Samir Kavar — Minister of Water and Irrigation;
8. Ali Abul Al Ragheb — Minister of Industry and Trade;
9. Saleh Irsheidat — Minister of Tourism and Antiquities;
10. Abdul Razzaq Theishat — Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment;
11. Aref Bataineh — Minister of Health;
12. Abdul Salam Al Abbadi — Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs;
13. Rima Khalaf-Hneidi — Minister of Planning;
14. Hashem Dabbas — Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources;
15. Mohammad Thweib — Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs;
16. Hisham Al Tal — Minister of State for Prime Ministry Affairs;
17. Hammad Abu Jamous — Minister of Social Development;
18. Munir Sobar — Minister of Supply;
19. Abdul Hafez Shakhaneh — Minister of Labour;
20. Mufleh Rheimi — Minister of State;
21. Ahmad Qudah — Minister of Culture;
22. Mustafa Shneikat — Minister of Agriculture;
23. Mahmood Abdul Latif Hweimeil — Minister of State;
24. Mohammad Daoudieh — Minister of Youth;
25. Mohammad Odeh Njadat — Minister of State;
26. Munther Al Masri — Minister of Education;
27. Marwan Awad — Minister of Finance;
28. Khalid Madadha — Minister of State for Foreign Affairs;
29. Marwan Musasher — Minister of Information;
30. Kamal Naser — Minister of Administrative Development; and
31. Naser Al Lawzi — Minister of Transport.

Foreign policy of the new prime minister -- adjustment looms to keep balance at home

By Lamis K. Andoni
 Special to the Jordan Times

PRIME MINISTER Abdul Karim Kabariti's rapid political rise is attributed mostly to his active and often aggressive performance in promoting Jordan's foreign policies in the post-Gulf war era.

For even though Jordan's major foreign policy shift started with the opening of the Madrid peace conference in 1991, Mr. Kabariti, who was appointed as foreign minister in January 1995, was more assertive than any of his predecessors in seeking to redefine the Kingdom's regional role.

The fact that Mr. Kabariti, unlike Jordanian politicians, maintained a cautious position during the Gulf war and never came out in support of the Iraqi invasion of

Kuwait placed him in a strong position to pursue reconciliation with the Gulf states and the renewal in the post-peace era of the strategic alliance with the U.S.

His designation as prime minister will put to rest speculation that his outspoken advocacy of some of the less popular foreign policies, including support of change in Iraq, was out of tune with the rest of the country.

As foreign minister, Mr. Kabariti maintained a high-profile performance just as some of his colleagues kept their distance from the post-Gulf war policies.

This performance is attributed by analysts to his long association with the palace's political vision and unusual manoeuvring style that combines diplomacy with bluntness.

His style, particularly some critical statements against both Syria and Iraq, has provoked counter-criticism by many politicians who were wary that Jordan's new closeness to Israel would lead to estrangement from its Arab neighbours.

But Mr. Kabariti was lacking his sharp statements with careful diplomacy, which is an indication of not only political acumen but also of confidence that he is in tune with the palace at a time when many of his colleagues were reluctant to actively promote Jordan's new policies.

The fact that fellow ministers in the Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker Cabinet hesitated in fully endorsing full normalization with Israel and moves towards reconciliation with Saudi Arabia often at the expense of relations with Iraq

singled out Mr. Kabariti as the most outspoken defender of the new policies.

While many politicians, especially from the "old guard," found it extremely difficult to depart with ideals that emanated from commitment to pan-Arab nationalism and to the attainment of all Palestinian national rights, Mr. Kabariti showed a high level of flexibility and adaptability.

The shift in his attitude towards Jordan's relations with the Palestinians is perhaps the most important indicator of this flexibility. As a junior politician and Parliament member, Mr. Kabariti was known to espouse a hard-line "East Bank" attitude whose hallmark was to protect against

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Perseverance, drive behind the rise of Kabariti to power

By Salameh Ne'matt
 Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The new prime minister, Abdul Karim Kabariti, did not make it to the top post by accident. Nor was it an easy ride for him to be where he is today.

His leadership qualities became evident as far back as 1971, when he headed the Jordanian Students Association at the American University of Beirut (AUB). The 22-year-old student of geology was so effective in resisting an overwhelming pro-Nasserite wave at the university that he was finally kidnapped by the Democratic Front for the Libera-

tion of Palestine, in the first political kidnapping in Lebanon. His release was soon secured through His Majesty King Hussein's mediation with the Lebanese power-brokers. The King, who was impressed by this young man's determination to defend the then embattled monarchy, received him at the airport upon his return to Amman.

Mr. Kabariti's wife, Fatima, who knew him since childhood, said her husband "always knew what he wanted... and almost always got it."

In describing his personality, she said the man "is

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Cabinet assured of vote of confidence

By Sa'eda Kilani
 Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Judging by its make-up, the government of Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti is likely to easily win Parliament's support when it seeks a vote of confidence in the Lower House.

Deputies representing various parliamentary blocs told the Jordan Times on Sunday that they will, in principle, vote in favour of the new government but their final decision will be based on Mr. Kabariti's response in his Cabinet's policy statement to demands they made during consultations they held with him over the past several days.

Although the three mainstream parliamentary blocs, the Democratic Parliamentarian Coalition (seven members), the National Action Front (16 members) and the Jordanian National Front

(nine members), insisted that Mr. Kabariti should give ministerial portfolios to their blocs that correspond to their weight in Parliament, they all said they will vote for the government. Not only that, they also anticipated radical changes in the government's internal policies, particularly in regard to public freedoms and human rights.

Opposition in Parliament is divided. While the 16-member Islamic Action Front Party bloc insists on its stand of withholding confidence since "Mr. Kabariti said he can't stop the peace process," leftist deputies are likely to give Mr. Kabariti's government a vote of confidence although they too oppose the Arab-Israeli peace process.

"Mr. Kabariti cannot revoke the peace treaty and it is no longer the responsibility of the government. It is now up to the House to do this

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Kabariti and the opposition -- evolution characterises relationship between them

By Natasha Bukhari
 Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The "agreement to work together" that Prime Minister-designate Abdul Karim Kabariti reached with Islamist leaders on Saturday signals the end of an era in historically tense relations between them and heralds the beginning of a "truce" period that is hoped to last throughout the mandate of the new government.

The "truce" or "armistice," as politicians are already billing it, came after consultations at the Royal Court between Mr. Kabariti and the Islamists, who were represented by Ishaq Farhan, secretary general of the Islamic Action Front (IAF), IAF spokesman and Deputy Hamzeh Mansour, Abdul Majeed Thneibat, head of

the Muslim Brotherhood, and Senator Abdul Latif Arabiyat.

The meeting, described as "very warm and friendly," resulted in an agreement between the prime minister-designate and the Islamists, who promised Mr. Kabariti that although they would not join his government or vote in favour of it in Parliament, they would support him in return for "easing the pressure against them, as exercised by Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker's government, work towards improving the elections law which was finalised by that government as well as strengthen freedom of expression and human rights," in the country.

Mr. Kabariti pledged that the demands would be met and assured the Islamists that they "were welcome to join the govern-

ment" if they wished, according to well-informed sources.

This "truce" shows Mr. Kabariti to be the pragmatic politician that he is, at least succeeding in neutralising hostility where he is not capable of winning outright support from fellow deputies and other political groups, according to some politicians and analysts.

The analysts and politicians interviewed by the Jordan Times over the past several days agreed that it was no surprise that Mr. Kabariti had tried to win the Islamists to his side and that they were sure to respond positively, especially in the knowledge that the King is extending "full backing" to him. Besides, Mr. Kabariti has, since 1994, played a major role in acting as a mediator between the opposing Islamists and the palace, sources

close to him said.

"At this stage, we will not participate in the government... we wish Mr. Kabariti all the success in his mission and we are ready to cooperate with him on issues of national concern," Dr. Farhan told the Jordan Times in an interview on Saturday.

The "cooperation" promised by Dr. Farhan will be translated into less "activism" of the government by the Islamist-led opposition provided that Mr. Kabariti's government does not tighten the noose around them, one Islamist, who asked not to be identified, told the Jordan Times yesterday.

It would also entail a role for the Islamists in mediation efforts between the government and professional unions, which have

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King bestows title of 'Prince' upon outgoing premier

By Alla Toukan
 Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — His Majesty King Hussein on Sunday bestowed upon Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker the title of prince, in what many analysts see as an apparent bid to show appre-

ciation for the former prime minister's service to the country.

"I am glad to address you, and that all Jordanians should address you from now on, as Prince Zeid Ben Shaker," wrote the King in a letter

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King honours ex-aides; Batikhi to head GID

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein on Sunday conferred medals on a number of senior government officials in recognition of their dedication and unique services to the country.

In another letter of designation, the King assigned Maj. Gen. Samih Batikhi as director general of the GID, succeeding Mr. Qaisi.

King Hussein voiced his appreciation of Gen. Batikhi's dedicated services to Jordan and assigned him the new duties.

The King wished Gen. Batikhi every success in shouldering his new responsibilities.

The King also conferred Al Kawkab Medal of the First Order on the newly-appointed Royal Court chief, Awn Khasawneh, in appreciation of his dedicated services to his country and the King.

Mr. Qaisi was named on Sunday as the King's advisor for national security affairs and rapporteur of the State Security Council.

Need for water creates Syrian-Iraqi 'alliance'

CAIRO (AFP) — A dispute with Turkey over the Euphrates River has prompted old foes Syria and Iraq to bury the hatchet and work together.

The two countries, which are ruled by rival branches of the Baath party and broke diplomatic ties in 1980, have accused Ankara of diverting vital waters from the Euphrates ignoring their needs.

Now experts from Syria and Iraq, which both suffer from hot, dry summers and use the river waters for irrigating crops, are set to meet in Damascus on Feb. 10 to discuss the problem.

And for the first time Baghdad has suggested that their foreign ministers should meet at the Arab League headquarters in Cairo, although Damascus has yet to reply to the invitation.

Iraq is "very eager" to work with Syria to resolve their differences with Turkey over the waters of the Euphrates and Tigris, said Iraq's representative to the Arab League Nabil Nejm.

"The secretary general of the league is working to try to organise a meeting of the two foreign ministers on the sidelines of the next Arab ministerial meeting due in March," Egypt's representative Mahmoud Murtada told AFP.

Relations between Damascus and Baghdad soured when Syria backed Iran at the start of the Islamic republic's

1980-1988 war with Iraq, and took part in a U.S.-led coalition which drove Iraq occupying forces out of Kuwait in the 1991 Gulf war.

"For the first time in years, these two countries are adopting coherent positions," Mr. Murtada said.

"They could put aside their political differences for they have an interest in a joint approach towards Turkey on the vital issue of water."

A senior league official said privately: "This meeting is due to be devoted to the sharing of the Euphrates waters but for Baghdad it will be a spectacular step towards breaking its isolation within the Arab World."

The dispute over the Euphrates rose to the fore once more when Ankara signed a contract with a European consortium in November to build two new dams at Birecik and Karamlis close to the Syrian border.

The work is part of a huge project known as GAP launched in the 1960s in south-eastern Anatolia, which Iraq and Syria fear will reduce the flow of the 2,800 kilometres river.

An Iraqi memorandum passed to the league charged that "Turkey is pursuing its GAP project without taking into account Syria and Iraq's rights to the Euphrates."

The river rises in Turkey and crosses Syria before entering Iraq. But Iraq charges its flow has fallen by more than half — from 30.2 billion

cubic metres a year to 14.5 billion-cubic metres since the Ataturk dam was completed in 1992.

Both countries want to establish quotas for sharing the waters.

But an expert from the Food and Agriculture Organisation speaking on condition of anonymity said "there is no international law in this area but a statement of vague principles setting out 'a fair and reasonable sharing' of the waters of rivers."

"The Turks say that God gave the Arabs oil and Turkey water," he added.

Turkish Ambassador Yasar Yagci denied charges of diverting the waters saying Ankara had worked to guarantee a minimum flow of 500 cubic metres second to Syria since 1987. He added that currently the flow was around 780 cubic metres.

"Damascus and Baghdad want to share the waters arbitrarily. Syria wants 14 billion cubic metres a year, Baghdad 21 billion cubic metres and have suggested that Turkey should have 18 billion."

"We cannot accept this request which does not correspond to what God has given the Turks."

"We suggested that they study the potential of the water in the Tigris basin and the Euphrates and the potential of irrigable lands in the three countries to define the needs of each," he added.

Oil-for-food resolution at heart of Iraq-U.N. talks

UNITED NATIONS (AFP) — Iraq and the United Nations meeting here Tuesday are to try to find a way of implementing resume limited oil exports for the first time in almost six years.

The resolution was adopted on April 14, 1995 to allow Iraq to raise money purely for humanitarian supplies for its people.

But Iraq has repeatedly rebuffed the offer on the grounds that it infringes its sovereignty, through the conditions it sets for the export of the oil and the distribution of revenue.

The United Nations insists that no amendments are possible to the points of the resolution, which are as follows:

— The Security Council is "convinced of the need as a temporary measure to provide for the humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people" until Baghdad meets Gulf war ceasefire resolutions.

— It is "convinced also of the need for equitable distribution of humanitarian relief to all segments of the Iraqi population throughout the country."

— The resolution authorises Iraq to export \$1 billion of oil per quarter under strict conditions.

— Each proposed purchase of Iraqi oil must be approved by the U.N. Sanctions Committee, and the money is to be paid into an escrow account opened

by the U.N. secretary general.

— Turkey will receive payment in the form of Iraqi oil and related products for allowing the crude to be exported via a pipeline between Kirkuk in Iraq and Yumurtalik in Turkey.

— The resolution will be implemented for a period of 180 days, after which it may be renewed, and will be thoroughly reviewed by the Security Council every 90 days.

— The U.N. Sanctions Committee will supervise the sale of oil, most of which will be exported via the Kirkuk-Yumurtalik pipeline and the rest via Iraq's Mina Al Bakr oil terminal on the Gulf. Independent inspectors will

check that the purchase price of the Iraqi oil is fair.

— The revenue generated by oil sales, paid into the U.N. escrow account, "shall be used to meet the humanitarian needs of the Iraqi population."

— The resolution asks U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali to use the money to finance the export to Iraq of medicine, health supplies, food and other essential civilian supplies. Each export of goods has to be at the request of the Iraqi government.

— Iraq must "effectively guarantee their (the goods) equitable distribution on the basis of a plan submitted to and approved by the secretary general" in advance.

— Between \$130 million and \$150 million will be paid each quarter to the U.N. humanitarian programme in Kurdish-controlled northern Iraq "in order to ensure an equitable distribution of humanitarian relief to all segments of the Iraqi population."

— A percentage of the oil revenue will also go to a U.N. compensation fund for victims of Iraq's August 1990 invasion of Kuwait, and to finance the activities of U.N. experts monitoring Iraqi disarmament.

— The Security Council stresses that "nothing in this resolution should be construed as infringing the sovereignty or territorial integrity of Iraq."

NEWS IN BRIEF

U.N. human rights envoy to visit Iran

TEHRAN (AFP) — A U.N. human rights rapporteur is due to visit here next week to examine the general rights situation in Iran, the official IRNA news agency announced Sunday. Maurice Danby Copithorne, the U.N. Human Rights Commission's new representative for Iran, will arrive here on Feb. 10 and stay until Feb. 16, it said. The former Canadian diplomat, replaced former U.N. human rights rapporteur for the Islamic republic, Reynaldo Galindo Pohl, who angered the Iranian authorities after he wrote a report critical of the situation in Iran four years ago. Iran had since refused him a visa for further visits, but the authorities said in December that they would receive the new U.N. rapporteur provided he based his reports on "facts."

Ajman grants amnesty to 65 prisoners for Ramadan

AJMAN (AFP) — Some 65 prisoners in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) have been pardoned for the Muslim Holy Month of Ramadan, the official WAM news agency said. The amnesty, issued by the governor of Ajman emirate, Sheikh Hamid Bin Rashid Al Nuimi, includes prisoners convicted of various crimes. Another amnesty was granted last week in the northern emirate of Ras Al Khaimah for 83 prisoners as a gesture during Ramadan.

Cabinet assured of vote

(Continued from page 1)

job, leftist deputy Toujan Faisal told the Jordan Times. "What we demand is an improvement of the situation (at the national level). Mr. Kabarti responded positively when we (independent deputies) raised the issue (during a meeting yesterday) of the need to safeguard public liberties... it is based on this that I will evaluate the new government."

Ms. Faisal had voted against the governments of Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker and Abdul Salam Majali. But this time it is different, she said. "I had very good reasons for withholding confidence from the Majali and the Sharif Zeid governments," Ms. Faisal said. But "I have nothing against Mr. Kabarti. His political record is very recent."

The only female deputy said she would vote for the new Cabinet in principle, but she would wait until the final make-up of the new government was determined before she decided.

The announcement of the formation of the Cabinet came late in the evening yesterday.

Ms. Faisal's stand is shared by other leftist and independent deputies.

Bassam Haddadin, also leftist, said that Mr. Kabarti showed a genuine intention of enhancing public freedoms and applying the rule of law.

"If pressures are alleviated on Mr. Kabarti, then there will be positive change," said Mr. Haddadin.

Centrist Deputy Mohammad Adhoub Zaben said that he will vote in favour of the government if its policy state-

New government is sworn in

(Continued from page 1)

from Irbid, who took over the tourism portfolio from Abed Ilah Khatib, who was not included in the new lineup. Nasser Al Lawzi, a newcomer to the Cabinet, was appointed transport minister.

In his letter of designation to Mr. Kabarti, King Hussein clearly spelt out his vision of Jordan's future and the course through which that vision could be achieved in terms of comprehensive change in the system of government while upholding the principles of democracy, political pluralism and respect of human rights (see full text of the King's letter on page 7).

According to sources close to Mr. Kabarti, the new prime minister wanted to send a strong message of commitment to public freedoms and democracy in the Kingdom by his decision to appoint a Parliament member, Awad Khleifat (deputy from Tafleh), as minister of interior, a first-time appointment for a parliamentarian in this post which is usually reserved for establishment figures with strong links with the security institutions. Mr. Khleifat served as minister of youth in the outgoing government.

The appointment of Kamal Nasser, president of the Jordan Bar Association, as minister of administrative development was seen as a comforting message to Jordanians who had been complaining of "regression" in democratic practices with the former government.

Over and above these appointments, Mr. Kabarti's choice of minister of information, Jordan's Ambassador to Israel Marwan Muasher, was expected to be received among the media circles in the Kingdom who hold Dr. Muasher in high esteem after his success as spokesman for the Jordanian delegation to Middle East peace negotiations.

It is widely expected that Mr. Kabarti, working in close concert with Dr. Muasher, will either abolish the Ministry of Information or limit the ministry's role to administrative affairs rather than as a spokesman for the government.

Dr. Muasher, who served as press advisor at the Prime Ministry in 1989, was then a strong advocate of clearly defining the role of the Ministry of Information as an "administrative ministry."

Mr. Kabarti's option to retain the foreign affairs portfolio was taken as a strong

indication of his determination to personally continue to lead the course for better relations with the Gulf Arab states and the policy vis-a-vis Iraq as charted in the last few months in addition to consolidating the Kingdom's strong ties with the United States and the West as well as Japan in general.

Khaled Madadha, Jordan's ambassador in Brussels, was appointed minister of state for foreign affairs. The appointment obviously kept the door open for Mr. Kabarti to delegate authority to the minister of state in most administrative aspects of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as well as to implement decisions related to foreign affairs taken by the prime minister and government.

However, Mr. Kabarti is expected to personally deal with all important foreign policy issues and to keep in close touch with key developments on a daily basis.

With his close friend Awn Khasawneh as chief of the Royal Court as appointed by the King on Saturday, Mr. Kabarti is also assured of a harmonious relationship between the Prime Ministry and the Royal Court.

The absence of such a relationship has often led to friction, observers say, citing several occasions in Jordan's history when the prime minister could not see eye to eye with the chief of the Royal Court, who, by definition, remains close to the Monarch on a daily basis.

Three advisors of the King resigned on Saturday in line with the turn to sweeping changes in power in the country, and it was not known by press time on Sunday whether the Monarch had named their replacements except for Mustafa Qaisi, the former head of the General Intelligence Department, who was appointed as an advisor to the King.

Of the key economic team, Mr. Kabarti retained Planning Minister Khalaf and Minister of Industry and Trade Abdul Ragheb in their jobs, but appointed Marwan Awad, a banker and former secretary general of the Ministry of Industry and Trade, as minister of finance to replace veteran Basel Jarad.

Abdullah Ensour, a technocrat-turned-politician and Member of Parliament (Salt) who served in several former governments and who was earlier tipped to be

named finance minister, joined the Cabinet as minister of education.

Abdul Karim Dughmi, a lawyer and Parliament member from Mafrqa who has served in previous Cabinets, was named minister of justice to replace Hisham Al Tal, who was moved to the Prime Ministry as minister of state.

Hashem Dabbas, a deputy from Salt who has served as minister of posts and telecommunications and earlier as head of the audit bureau, took over the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources to replace Samih Darwazah.

Abdul Razzaq Thubeishat, a deputy from Irbid who has served in previous governments, became minister of municipal and rural affairs and the environment.

Abdul Hadi Majali (deputy from Karak), a former chief of staff of the armed forces and ambassador who now heads one of the strongest centrist blocs in Parliament, was appointed minister of public works.

Among the newcomers to the Cabinet is Mohammad Daoudiyeh, a known journalist who was elected to Parliament in the 1993 elections, from Tafleh, who took over the ministry of youth.

Munther Al Masri, who served for many years as director general of the Vocational Training Corporation, was appointed minister of education in what was seen as a move towards realigning the Kingdom's education system towards meeting the requirements of the local labour market rather than turning out thousands of degree holders every year.

Newcomers to the Cabinet include Mohammad Thweib, a deputy from Amman (minister of state of parliamentary affairs), Hammad Abu Jamous (social development), Munir Sobar, a deputy from Amman (supply), Abdul Hafez Shakanbeh, a deputy from Madaba (labour), Mufleh Rheimi, a deputy from Jerash (minister of state without portfolio), Ahmad Qudah, a deputy from Ajloun (culture), Mustafa Shneikat, a deputy from Salt (agriculture), Mahmoud Hweimat, a deputy from the Jordan Valley (minister of state without portfolio), and Mohammad Odeh Njadat, a deputy from Southern Bedouins (minister of state without portfolio).

Scandal over blood taints Ethiopians' 'promised land'

TEL AVIV (AP) — Ever since she was a child, Yafa Sahalu remembered hearing about Israel.

"Jerusalem is the dream," said Yafa, who came here with her family during the first airlift of Ethiopian Jews in 1985. "God promised us we would go."

Years of hardship failed to dim the luster of the "promised land." But the revelation that Israel's blood bank was secretly throwing away Ethiopian donations for fear they were contaminated with the AIDS virus stunned the Sahalus and the rest of Israel's 56,000 Ethiopian Jews.

The rejection of the blood struck a nerve far deeper and more painful than the myriad other slights the Ethiopians have felt in Israel. It touched upon their very Jewishness, the one thing they clung to through centuries of exile.

"I was accepted in Israel," said Nathan Sahalu, Yafa's husband. "I was invited to their weddings. I danced with them. I laughed with them. Now, even if I'm invited, I'm not going. Something is not the same."

A protest last weekend by an estimated 10,000 Ethiopians deteriorated into rock-throwing that injured more than 70 people, stunning other Israelis, who had stereotyped the Ethiopians as a quiet, cheerful people.

The medical argument — that Ethiopians have a higher incidence of AIDS than the rest of Israeli society — did little to shake the Ethiopians' conviction that the blood policy was racist.

"We are blood brothers with all the Jewish people," pleaded a sign at the protest.

"We were lied to for many years," Adisu Masala, a leader of the Ethiopian community, said of the blood rejection. "The decision was very stupid. It was discrimination."

The violence came at a difficult time for the government of Prime Minister Shimon Peres, who faces general elections amid stirrings of discontent from other ethnic groups left out of Israel's economic boom.

In its wake, Mr. Peres promised to look into the problems facing the Ethiopian community — from education to housing to suicides in the army.

"We have kept quiet for a long time," protest leader Muski Shibro-Zivan wrote in Israel's Maariv newspaper. "We want the real problems to be addressed."

Nathan and Yafa Sahalu, on the face of it, are a success story among Israel's Ethiopian immigrants.

They walked across the desert to Sudan, where they lived for a year in refugee camps before coming here during Operation Moses, Israel's covert airlift that rescued 7,500 Ethiopian Jews from severe famine and drought.

Fourteen thousands more arrived in Operation Solomon in 1991, during Ethiopia's civil war.

After living five years in temporary housing, the Sahalus moved into a spacious apartment in Neve Yaacov, a new neighbourhood in northern Jerusalem, aided by a government grant that covers 85 per cent of their mortgage.

Nathan, a thin 41-year-old,

with short-cropped hair and a white knitted skullcap, works in a factory that makes aluminum window frames.

Yafa, 31, is a hospital aide. She has brown eyes and an easy smile, and tucks her hair under a soft blue velvet hat in keeping with observant Jewish tradition, that requires married women to cover their hair.

They speak fluent Hebrew, and their six children play with Israeli friends. A painting above their couch depicts an Israeli village scene with a black-hatted European Jew in the foreground.

They escaped the isolation in segregated communities that faced many Ethiopians. While Israelis sometimes called them "cushis" — a derogatory word for blacks — they said they never felt discriminated against here.

Until now.

"The way I feel is, I'm nothing," said Yafa, gesturing with her hand as if she were throwing away a piece of garbage.

She said she worries her children will be branded with the stigma of AIDS and that she gets bad feelings at work from people she had thought were friends.

"People tell me that Ethiopians have HIV," she said. "I get on the bus, everyone's staring at me."

"I'm afraid to sit close to people, to shake hands like I used to," added Nathan. "They think we'll pass it on to them."

Masala compared the blood rejection to the debate after the first Ethiopians arrived over whether they were really Jewish. At the time, some rabbis demanded they undergo a symbolic conversion.

planned a sign at the protest.

"We were lied to for many years," Adisu Masala, a leader of the Ethiopian community, said of the blood rejection. "The decision was very stupid. It was discrimination."

The violence came at a difficult time for the government of Prime Minister Shimon Peres, who faces general elections amid stirrings of discontent from other ethnic groups left out of Israel's economic boom.

In its wake, Mr. Peres promised to look into the problems facing the Ethiopian community — from education to housing to suicides in the army.

"We have kept quiet for a long time," protest leader Muski Shibro-Zivan wrote in Israel's Maariv newspaper. "We want the real problems to be addressed."

Nathan and Yafa Sahalu, on the face of it, are a success story among Israel's Ethiopian immigrants.

They walked across the desert to Sudan, where they lived for a year in refugee camps before coming here during Operation Moses, Israel's covert airlift that rescued 7,500 Ethiopian Jews from severe famine and drought.

Fourteen thousands more arrived in Operation Solomon in 1991, during Ethiopia's civil war.

After living five years in temporary housing, the Sahalus moved into a spacious apartment in Neve Yaacov, a new neighbourhood in northern Jerusalem, aided by a government grant that covers 85 per cent of their mortgage.

Nathan, a thin 41-year-old,

with short-cropped hair and a white knitted skullcap, works in a factory that makes aluminum window frames.

Yafa, 31, is a hospital aide. She has brown eyes and an easy smile, and tucks her hair under a soft blue velvet hat in keeping with observant Jewish tradition, that requires married women to cover their hair.

They speak fluent Hebrew, and their six children play with Israeli friends. A painting above their couch depicts an Israeli village scene with a black-hatted European Jew in the foreground.

They escaped the isolation in segregated communities that faced many Ethiopians. While Israelis sometimes called them "cushis" — a derogatory word for blacks — they said they never felt discriminated against here.

Until now.

"The way I feel is, I'm nothing," said Yafa, gesturing with her hand as if she were throwing away a piece of garbage.

She said she worries her children will be branded with the stigma of AIDS and that she gets bad feelings at work from people she had thought were friends.

"People tell me that Ethiopians have HIV," she said. "I get on the bus, everyone's staring at me."

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JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

14:00 Bonkers (cartoon)

14:30 Richie Rich

15:00 Playhouse

15:30 Bustan Looc

16:00 Animals of the Mediterranean

16:30 Voyageurs

17:00 Des Plantes Et Des Hommes

17:20 Les Comagrons de L'Adventure

17:50 Magazine — C'Est Pas Sorcier

18:20 Family Programme — L'Ecole de Paris

19:00 News in French

19:30 News Headlines

19:35 Michal's Navy

20:00 Huwai Five — O

21:11 Doc — The Missing Years

22:00 News in English

22:35 — A Journey Across the Land of Islam

22:40 Drama — Perfect Soundings

23:11 — Drama — Taurus Rising

23:51 — Comedy — Ellen

00:00 — Fair

00:21 — (Sunrise) Duba

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church

Swellish, Tel. 810740

Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 827875

St. Joseph Church, Tel. 824981

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 837420

De la Salle Church Tel. 812757

Terrace Church Tel. 822366

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 823541

Anglican Church Tel. 828206

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771251

Armenian International Church Tel. 652526

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824326

German-speaking Evangelical Church of Nazareth Tel. 654932

The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

Sunny weather conditions will

prevail with temperatures rising slightly and winds westerly to light to moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

Min./Max. temp.

Amman 13, Aqaba 18, Humidity 21

Decent 21

Jordan Valley 6/20

Yesterday's high temperatures:

Amman 13, Aqaba 18, Humidity 21

Decent 21

Jordan Valley 6/20

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Jilad Sammur 755255

Dr. Wazim Haza 748563

Profiles of members of the new Cabinet

Following are profiles of the members of Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti's new Cabinet which was sworn in Sunday:

Abdullah Ensour Minister of Higher Education

Born in Salt in 1930, he obtained his BSc from the American University of Beirut, a masters from Wayne State University in 1965 and a doctorate in human resources planning from Sorbonne University in Paris. He served as director general of the Budget Department, director of the Income Tax Department and in several ministerial posts. He is a member of the present Parliament representing Balqa district.



Awad Khleifat Minister of Interior

Born in Wadi Musa in 1945, he obtained a BA in history from the University of Jordan in 1967 and a doctorate from London University in 1973. He worked as chairman of the University of Jordan's History Department before becoming Yarmouk University vice-president and later Muta University president and minister of youth. He became minister of higher education in the government of Shari Zeid Ben Shaker in 1991. He is a member of the present Parliament from Madaba district.



Abdul Hadi Al Majali Minister of Public Works and Housing

Born in Karak in 1934, he obtained a BSc in civil engineering from Baghdad University in 1957 and served as Jordan's ambassador to the U.S., then as Public Security Department director. He joined the Armed Forces and served as chief of staff. He is a member of the present Parliament from Karak district.



Abdul Karim Dughmi Minister of Justice

Born in Mafrqa in 1955, he completed his school education in 1973 and obtained a BA in law in 1977. He worked as a lawyer and became minister of municipal affairs in the government of Mudar Badran in 1989. He is a member of Parliament from Mafrqa district.



Jamal Sarairoh Minister of Post and Communications

Born in Hashimiya near Karak in 1954, he finished school in Karak in 1971 and got his BA in English from Kuwait University in 1976. He worked for ARAMCO between 1978-1982 and as a representative of the Tipline company in Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and Turkey since 1982. He was elected member of the Lower House of Parliament in 1989 and became minister of post and communications. He was elected in 1993 as member of Parliament in Karak district and was appointed minister of post and communications for the second time.



Samir Kassar Minister of Water and Irrigation

Born in Salt in 1934, he received his masters degree in agricultural equipment design from Texas University. He worked as an engineer first in Deir Alla, Jordan Valley, and then at the phosphate mines in Al Hasa, near Tafleeh. He became minister of water and irrigation in the government of Shari Zeid Ben Shaker. Kassar is member of Parliament of the Balqa district.



Ali Abul Ragheb Minister of Industry and Trade

Born in Amman in 1946, he obtained a BSc in civil engineering from the U.S. in 1967 and served in several posts including those at the Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Amman Municipality. He was president of the contractors association between 1986 and 1990. He served as minister of industry and trade, supply and energy between 1991 and 1993. He is a member of Parliament for the Balqa district.



Saleh Irsheidat Minister of Tourism and Antiquities

Born in Irbid in 1946, he completed his school in Irbid and Egypt where he obtained a BSc in engineering in 1970. In 1975 he became a teacher at an engineering college in Germany where he also obtained a doctorate degree. He worked for the private sector until he became minister of youth in the government of Shari Zeid Ben Shaker in 1991. He is a member of Parliament of Irbid district.



Abdul Razzaq Tubeishat Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment

Born in Irbid in 1939, he obtained his BA in medicine from Istanbul University. He worked for the Jordanian Armed Forces and later as general practitioner in Irbid before becoming mayor of the city. He held several ministerial posts. He represents Irbid district in the Lower House of Parliament.



Aref Bataineh Minister of Health

Born in Barha in 1931, he was educated at Bir Zeit University and later received a BSc in medicine from London University in 1960. He worked for the Jordanian Armed Forces and was appointed director of Al Hussein Medical Centre in 1980. In 1990 he became director of the Royal Medical Services and later health minister serving under Prime Minister Shari Zeid Ben Shaker. He represents Irbid district in the Lower House of Parliament.



Abdul Salam Abbadi Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs

Born in Amman in 1943, he finished school in 1959 before joining the Sharia College in Damascus where he obtained a BA degree in Islamic Law in 1963. He worked at government schools until 1966 before going to Cairo to obtain his masters and doctorate degrees in 1972. Later he worked for the Ministry of Awqaf and as a teacher at the University of Jordan and served in several posts. He served as minister of Awqaf in 1993.



Rima Khalaf Minister of Planning

Born in Kuwait in 1953, she completed her school education in Amman and later obtained a BA in economics from the American University of Beirut in 1976. She went to the U.S. where she obtained a masters and doctorate degrees in system science economics in 1984. Between 1985 and 1990 she worked for the Ministry of Planning and she served as head of Jordan Export Development and Commercial Centres Corporation before becoming minister in 1993.



Hashem Dabbas Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources

Born in Salt, he obtained his BA in commerce from Cairo University and his masters and doctorate degrees from the U.S. in 1963. He served as director of the Department of Statistics in 1970, as Ministry of Industry and Trade secretary general until 1980 and as head of the Audit Bureau. He represents Balqa Governorate in the Lower House of Parliament.



Mohammad Thweib Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs

Born in Taamreh near Bethlehem in 1941, he finished his school education in Bethlehem in 1960 and obtained a BA in arts from Beirut Arab University in 1967. He worked as a teacher for 24 years and served as member of Parliament between 1984 and 1988. He is a member of Parliament for Amman's second district.



Hisham Tal Minister of State for Prime Ministry Affairs

Born in Irbid in 1942, he finished his secondary education in Amman and obtained a BA in law from Damascus University in 1964 and was a practising lawyer until 1991 when he became a judge at the Higher Court of Justice. He served as minister of justice in the outgoing government.



Hammad Abu Jamous Minister of Social Development

Born in Amman, he finished school in 1958 and obtained a degree in engineering from the U.K. in 1961. He served in several private sector posts. He is now member of Parliament representing the First District of Amman.



Munir Sobar Minister of Supply

Born in Wadi Sir in 1949, he obtained a BSc in civil engineering from Ankara University in 1973. He worked at the Ministry of Public Works until 1982 when he opened a private engineering office at Bayader Wadi Sir. He is a member of Parliament representing the Fifth District of Amman.



Abdul Hafez Shakhaneh Minister of Labour

Born in Jeddah in 1950, he obtained a degree in medicine in Moscow in 1975. He has worked in private practice as a physician. He was elected as member of Parliament in 1993 elections in the Sixth District of Amman.



Munther Al Masri Minister of Education

Born in Nablus in 1935, he finished school education in the city and obtained a BA degree in electrical engineering from London University in 1958, a masters degree from Birmingham University in 1959, a BSc in mathematics from London University in 1961 and a doctorate degree in technical education from London University in 1985. He was director of the Vocational Training Corpora-



tion from 1977 to 1988 and later as secretary general at the Ministry of Education until 1995.

Mifteh Al Ruheimi Minister of State

He is member of Parliament representing the district of Jerash.



Ahmad Qudah Minister of Culture

Born in Ein Janna near Ajloun in 1940, he obtained a degree in medicine from Istanbul University in 1969 and served at the Ministry of Health. He was director of Ajloun Health Department and later became director of North Shuneh and Jerash health departments. He is a member of Parliament representing the Ajloun district.



Mustafa Shneikat Minister of Agriculture

Born in Balqa Governorate where he finished his secondary education, he holds a BA degree in medicine. He worked at a private clinic in the Jordan Valley until he was elected to the Lower House of Parliament in 1993 representing the Balqa district.



Mahmoud Huweimil Minister of State

He is member of Parliament since 1989 representing the district of Karak.



Mohammad Daoudiya Minister of Youth

Born in H-4 in 1947, he obtained a diploma in English from Amman schools and worked for the Ministry of Education from 1968 to 1976. He was a columnist in Al Dustour Arabic daily from 1976 to 1992 when he was appointed director of the information office at the Royal Court. He was elected member of Parliament in 1993 in Tafleeh.



Mohammad Odeh Njadat Minister of State

He is a career army officer who retired in 1993 after reaching the rank of major-general. He was elected member of Parliament in the 1993 elections representing the Southern Badia district.



Kamal Nasser Minister of Administrative Development

He was born in Ramin, near Tulkarim on the West Bank in 1944 and finished his secondary education in Nablus in 1962. He obtained a BA degree in law from Damascus University in 1966 and masters and Doctorate degrees from Cairo University in 1980. He practised law since then and in 1993 was elected president of the Jordan Bar Association, a position he held until his appointment as minister in the government of Abdul Karim Kabariti.



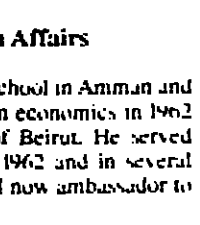
Marwan Awad Minister of Finance

He was born in Jerusalem in 1951 and finished his secondary education there. He then studied at the University of Jordan and obtained a BA degree in business administration in 1973 and later his MA from the U.S. He worked at the Central Bank of Jordan and later served for some time as acting director of the Arab Institute for Banking Studies before joining the Ministry of Industry and Trade as secretary general, a post he held until mid-1993 when he became general manager and member of the board of directors of the Middle East Investment Bank.



Khaled Madadha Minister of State for Foreign Affairs

Born in Salt in 1938, he finished school in Amman and later obtained a masters degree in economics in 1962 from the American University of Beirut. He served with the Foreign Ministry since 1962 and in several ambassadorial posts. He was until now ambassador to Belgium.



Naser Lawzi Minister of Transport

Born in Amman in 1957, he finished school in 1975 and later obtained a degree in civil engineering from the University of Texas in 1979. He worked for the Ministry of Public Works and then in the private sector from 1984 until now.



Marwan Muasher Minister of Information

Aged 39, Mr. Muasher was born in Salt. He has three engineering degrees from Purdue and holds a doctorate in computer sciences. He served as the director of the Jordan Information Bureau in Washington, D.C., and spokesman of the Jordanian negotiating team with Israel before becoming Jordan's ambassador to Israel.



Government agreement with oil company referred to Parliament

AMMAN (J.T.) — A draft agreement between the government and the National Oil Company (NOC) granting the company a 50-year concession to prospect for oil and natural gas in Jordan has been referred to Parliament. The government has asked the Lower House to make discussion of the draft a priority in order to enable the company to begin its work, a government statement said Sunday.

The agreement between the government and the NOC was drafted last December following a Cabinet decision earlier in March to establish a government-controlled company to prospect for oil and natural gas, according to the Jordan News Agency, Petra.

Under the draft agreement, the company is allowed to conduct prospecting operations in areas close to the Kingdom's international borders with Syria, Iraq and Saudi Arabia and to market the oil and gas in Jordan and abroad on a purely commercial basis, Petra said.

The NOC will drill wells, set up storage facilities and lay pipelines and other installations necessary for

the work, and appropriate or lease property for its exploration operations, according to the draft agreement.

Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Samih Darwazah, who signed the draft agreement with NOC Board Chairman Rajab Saad said last December that the concession allows the company to conduct seismological, geophysical and aerial surveys as part of its exploration work.

The JD 20 million company was established last July. It will be allowed to drill for water in the areas under its concessions for its own purposes, according to the agreement.

The agreement also stipulates that the company secure funds for its operations without relying on the government for support. Under the draft agreement the company and the government will split the profits from the sale of oil and gas and provides for the company to obtain licence for importing various equipment and apparatus needed for its operations free of customs duty or other taxes.

But the agreement also empowers the minister of energy and mineral

resources to have complete technical and financial supervision over the company's operations to ensure that it abides by the agreement.

The government has the right to end the concession deal with the company should the latter cede its concession to another party without due approval from the Council of Ministers or if it took measures considered as a violation of the contract with the government.

According to Mr. Darwazah the NOC will submit a biannual report to the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources on its plans and activities.

Also JD 250,000 will be allocated for an emergency fund used for purchasing food to be distributed to the needy Jordanian families during the month of Ramadan and Eid al Fitr.

An official statement which said that the decision has been taken upon directives of His Majesty King Hussein who announced the formation of a special committee to take charge of this mission.

Jordan, Germany launch Amman water network replacement project

AMMAN (J.T.) — Minister of Water and Irrigation Saleh Irsheidat and German Ambassador to Jordan Heinrich Reiners Sunday launched a project to replace the water network in the Amman districts of Luweibdeh, Jabal Amman and Wadi Saqra.

The German Development Bank is providing a JD 11 million soft loan to help the ministry carry out the scheme, according to the Ministry of Water and Irrigation. The ministry said work in the three districts, which began on Sunday, will cost around JD 4 million.

Visiting on the work sites, Mr. Reiners said, "We have decided to help Jordan in any way we can to improve the water situation of the capital through a two-phase project... We are providing JD 11 million for the

first phase and JD 22 million for the second phase starting later this year. I hope Germany will offer more loans for the other phases."

"The network substitution project is very important but very costly too," said the minister in a statement to Jordan Television while accompanying the German envoy to the work site. "We estimate that the substitution of all the worn-out networks in the Kingdom will cost JD 200 million, which is too big for the state treasury to bear," said Dr. Irsheidat.

"It is hoped that all the networks will be changed within four years, at which time the ministry will introduce a new water distribution system," said the minister.

Dr. Irsheidat said the next replacement phase entails

substitution of networks in Jabal Hussein, Jabal Srouor and parts of Jabal Amman and Jabal Nuzha. He said nearly JD 1.5 million from the German loan will go towards financing the purchase of equipment for the Water Authority of Jordan (WAS) to help it with its work.

In the Jabal Amman and Luweibdeh projects, the water authority will lay 156 kilometres of pipes, and in the Jabal Hussein-Qusur-Nuzha project, 215 kilometres of pipes will be laid, according to the minister.

Dr. Irsheidat who has just returned from a visit to Germany for talks on German aid to the country's water projects said the German government promised further assistance to the Kingdom to help it carry through the whole substitution project.

'2 Yadoudeh Highway accident victims remain in hospital'

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Two victims of Friday's fatal road collision that killed seven people, all from the same family, and injured 12 more, remained hospitalised Sunday in fair condition, hospital sources said.

A hospital official told the Jordan Times Sunday that 10 of the victims who were admitted to Al Bashir Hospital were discharged on Saturday.

"We only have two people left, and they are listed in fair condition and will be released from hospital in the next few days," the hospital official said. The accident, which

occurred at the Yadoudeh Highway, 10 kilometres south of Amman, was the third worst to be reported in the Kingdom since the beginning of the year.

It involved a pickup truck heading from Amman to Yadoudeh and a bus coming from the other direction, a Public Security Department (PSD) report said.

The pickup truck driver, Ahmad Mohammad, 31, who the report said was speeding, lost control of his vehicle rammed into the dividing rails and slammed into an oncoming bus driven by Khader Adel, 41.

The impact instantly killed seven of the 14 truck passengers, the report said,

adding that five of them were between the ages of one-year and 16.

During the month of January, more than 20 people were killed and dozens more were injured in road accidents, according to official reports.

On Jan. 25, six people, all from the same family, were killed when the pickup truck they were riding in collided with a lorry on the Azraq Highway.

On Jan. 23, six passengers, also riding in a pickup truck, were killed when their vehicle collided with a bus on the Balama Highway.

WHAT'S GOING ON

FILM

* "Milou en Mai" at the French Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.

PLAY/CONCERT

* "Ramadan Supermarket" (in Arabic) at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m. and a concert by Al Hannounah Band for Popular Art at 8:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

* Engravings by French artists at the French Cultural Centre (until Feb. 29).

* Paintings exhibition "A Moment of Dream" by Amer Bani Yassin at the Housing Bank Complex (until Feb. 5).

* Printmaking and paintings by Jordanian artist Yasser Dweik at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Luweibdeh. Also displaying paintings and sculptures by contemporary artists (until Feb. 18).

Chechens stage mass protest to press for Russian troop pullout

GROZNY, Russia (AFP) — Tens of thousands of Chechens staged a peaceful demonstration Sunday to press for a Russian troop pullout in the biggest show of popular discontent since the civil war began 14 months ago.

The massive demonstration, which rallied at least 35,000 people from the capital and nearby areas, came a day after the commander of Russian forces in Chechnya, General Viacheslav Tikhomirov, hinted his army could soon leave the republic.

Demonstrators chanting "withdraw Russian troops" hoisted portraits of separatist leader Dzhokhar Dudayev onto the walls of the presidential palace.

The centre of Grozny was teeming with demonstrators and awash with green flags, the colours of the Chechen separatists.

All police units in Grozny were on alert. Moscow Echo radio said. But no violent incidents were reported and Russian military road-blocks waved through demonstrators pouring in from nearby Shali without making any checks.

The police presence was scant in downtown Grozny,

but truckloads of Russian Interior Ministry Special Forces were on patrol nearby.

Some Russian soldiers stationed in the town went into hiding when the masses started descending on the centre, an AFP correspondent said.

Others were bracing themselves for possible trouble. "We have received full authorisation, including to shoot," one of the soldiers said, under cover of anonymity.

This is the biggest demonstration organised since Russian forces entered Chechnya to crush a separatist uprising on Dec. 11, 1994.

Pressure has been building on President Boris Yeltsin to end the civil war in Chechnya, particularly in the wake of a botched Russian assault last month to free hostages held by a Chechen commando in Dagestan, as well as the approach of June presidential polls in which Mr. Yeltsin is likely to stand.

The demonstration got underway Sunday morning with some 10,000 people rallying in the centre of the Chechen capital, just hundreds of metres from the

headquarters of the Moscow-installed administration of Doku Zavgayev.

Their ranks were swelled at midday by the arrival of some 25,000 people from nearby Shali and Gudermes, located southeast of Chechnya, and a second column comprising thousands more from Urus-Martan in the southwest.

"I have lots of friends in Russia. I have worked there and I did my military service there. But I was forced to take up arms and kill to defend my homeland and my people," said one demonstrator, Aslambek Sanguyev.

Salaudy Tukhaye, one of the protest organisers, said some demonstrators intended to "stay there day and night, until the departure of the last Russian soldier from Chechen territory."

A committee has been set up to feed the demonstrators, who will camp out in the centre of town, Mr. Tukhaye said.

This could pose problems as there is a curfew in force after 7:00 p.m. (1600 GMT), although it is violated on a nightly basis by gunfire exchanges between Russian soldiers and rebel soldiers.

Gen. Tikhomirov, commander of Moscow's forces in Chechnya, said Saturday that Russian policy would undergo "a 180 degree" turn, possibly indicating Moscow would withdraw its troops.

He said talks were underway between Moscow and Mr. Zavgayev's administration on a plan to withdraw Russian soldiers from the republic.

Mr. Yeltsin, for his part, has promised to announce proposals for a peaceful solution to the Chechen conflict in the coming days.

The Chechen security minister, Abu Movsayev, has warned that fighting would resume if Russia did not pull its troops out of the Caucasian republic.

"We have submitted an ultimatum to Russian troops and if it is not taken on board, we will launch large-scale fighting," he told AFP Sunday.

The civil war has left at least 25,000 civilians dead as well as thousands of soldiers on both sides. At present, the Russian army only controls Grozny and the main routes in the republic.



President Bill Clinton shakes hands with members of the crowd while holding young Tristan Machos in his arms after a rally in Manchester, New Hampshire Saturday. Mr. Clinton spoke to a crowd gathered in the St. Cecilia Social Hall about crime and community policing as he campaigned in the first-in-the-nation presidential primary state (Reuter photo)

Bob Dole stresses family values in Iowa campaign

MARION, Iowa (R) — Bob Dole returned to the Republican presidential nomination campaign trail in Iowa Saturday for a two-day blitz of this farm state hoping to open up his lead over current chief challenger Steve Forbes doggedly nipping at his heels.

At a rally earlier in Dubuque, Sen. Dole tried to gain strength with the strong Christian right bloc in the state by stressing an anti-abortion stand as a way to distance himself from Mr. Forbes.

Mr. Forbes, who says he is against abortion but does not have the support of the powerful anti-abortion National Right to Life Committee, said he wants to change the national attitude permitting legal abortions.

Sen. Dole, who stressed his small-town roots and "family values," said his first act as president if elected in November would be to reverse executive orders signed by President Bill Clinton that relaxed some anti-abortion rules.

"The (White House) Oval Office should be a place of moral leadership for America," Sen. Dole said. "For the past three years it has not been."

U.S. policies should be rooted in American values, "but our president has advocated policies that undermine these values," Sen. Dole said.

Sen. Dole ignored Mr. Forbes at his rally of 150 supporters here at a fiberglass bathtub manufacturing warehouse, telling reporters beforehand that "I don't talk about Forbes."

But in his talk here, without mentioning Mr. Forbes' name, Sen. Dole called on all candidates to release their income taxes, which multi-millionaire Forbes has refused to do.

Sen. Dole also played down his age of 72, saying some people said "our generation ought to retire, well our generation has a lot of juice left." If elected, Sen. Dole would be the oldest first-term U.S. president ever.

The Senate majority leader from neighbouring Kansas has been slipping in polls while Mr. Forbes, 48, has put on a self-financed, multi-million-dollar TV attack ad campaign that has moved him into second place.

Sen. Dole is a familiar figure in this state which holds presidential preference voting caucuses on Feb. 12, the second presidential preference test after Louisianaans voting on Feb. 6. But only Texas Senator Phil Gramm and columnist Pat Buchanan are competing in that southern state test.

Sen. Dole told the crowd here that the Louisiana caucus will be "dismissed" since only two are contesting that state while all nine active candidates are on the Iowa caucus ballots.

Sen. Dole is expected to win in Iowa as he did in his 1988 try for the presidential nomination, only to see his efforts go for naught after George Bush beat him in a bitter race in the New Hampshire presidential primary that year.

Three recent polls show Sen. Dole slipping while Mr. Forbes has moved ahead of him in New Hampshire, which holds the first primary voting for presidential nominating delegates on Feb. 20.

Mr. Forbes, who is campaigning to abol-

ish the federal income tax system and replace it with a simple 17 per cent flat tax, finished a two-day bus trip here Friday where he was greeted by large crowds eager to hear the self-described Washington outsider.

Sen. Dole struck out generally at the flat tax saying he is for "a fairer, flatter, simpler tax" but would oppose any that shifts tax burdens to the middle class.

At the bathtub warehouse here, the Senate majority leader addressed a crowd which also saw Sen. Dole's campaign movie stressing his early life, including how he was wounded in Italy in World War II, wounds that nearly killed him and left him with a virtually useless right arm.

Sen. Dole planned morning to night appearances in Iowa through Sunday.

He was escorted by Iowa's popular Republican Sen. Charles Grassley, who charged Mr. Clinton was a "political opportunist" leading his Democratic Party.

Sen. Dole opened up his appearance here with a moment of silence for the first American killed in Bosnia from a landmine earlier Saturday.

Meanwhile President Clinton Saturday stressed anti-crime efforts, pressed for a hike in the minimum wage and called for a bipartisan health reform bill as he wound up campaigning through New Hampshire.

Mr. Clinton, who is unchallenged in New Hampshire's first-in-the-nation primary, criss-crossed the state during his two-day swing to meet enthusiastic crowds and expand on themes he touched on in his State of the Union address last month.

Mr. Clinton does not plan to formally announce his candidacy for a second presidential term until spring and faces no serious challengers for his party's nomination.

But his trip to New Hampshire gave him an opportunity to talk about his vision for the future and counter some of the attacks against him from the nine Republican candidates vying to square off against him in the November election.

In his weekly radio address to the nation Saturday, Mr. Clinton urged lawmakers to approve a health reform bill he said had been stalled in the Senate because of intense lobbying from the insurance industry opposed to the reform.

The bill is sponsored by Sen. Nancy Kassebaum, a Kansas Republican, and Sen. Edward Kennedy, a Massachusetts Democrat, and is backed by a number of business groups.

It would require insurers to cover people who change or lose their jobs, limit the ability of insurance companies to exclude people because of pre-existing conditions and help small companies and individuals to form groups to buy insurance and get cheaper rates.

Mr. Clinton also repeated a call during his radio address for an increase in the minimum wage.

Mr. Clinton's visit to the snow-covered state — which holds the nation's first primary on Feb. 20 — also included a stop at a community police substation where he highlighted the 1994 crime bill and a provision to finance about 100,000 community police nationwide.

Patten calls for 'partnership' with Chinese body over Hong Kong

HONG KONG (AFP) — The Hong Kong government should form a "partnership" with the Chinese-appointed preparatory committee to ease the territory's transition to Beijing rule, Governor Chris Patten said Sunday.

Talking of a "process of cooperation" Mr. Patten signalled a loosening of Britain's grip on Hong Kong which reverts to China next year.

"Let me talk about a three-way partnership, which — if it works with a healthy dose of civility and understanding — will make the world of difference," Mr. Patten said on Hong Kong Radio.

The three partners, he said, were the Hong Kong government, which answers to London, the elected Legislative Council, and the Preparatory Committee, a group of 150 local and Chinese members appointed by Beijing and seen by many here as a shadow government in the run-up to the change of sovereignty.

Mr. Patten called for dialogue particularly between the Preparatory Committee and legislators.

"The Preparatory Committee has been urged by its chairman to talk to and listen to the people of Hong Kong... Talk to Hong Kong and you must talk to LEGCO (the Legislative Council)."

"Discussion between LEGCO and the Preparatory Committee should be straightforward, since about a quarter of LEGCO members have overlapping membership with the Preparatory Committee."

"The alternative to talking is exclusion," Mr. Patten warned, "and exclusion spells trouble."

He said one problem of the unease and lack of communication was a mood amongst legislators that they must change things before July 1, 1997.

1st world premiere of movie held in Inverness

INVERNESS, Scotland (AP) — Thousands of fans welcomed American actor Ted Danson to the first movie world premiere in the history of this highland capital Saturday. The \$9 million, American-made film Loch Ness premiered at La Scala movie theatre. Polygram, the film distributor, hired a chartered plane brought the movie's stars and 170 other performers, industry executives and critics. The film, shot in the highlands, is a romantic comedy about an American scientist, played by Danson, who looks for a monster, Nessie, that may live in the deep waters of Loch Ness. He falls in love with a local woman played by British actress Joely Richardson. For Danson it marked a return to his Scottish ancestry. Danson has traced his ancestry back to his great grandfather, believed to have been a labourer who lived near Glamis Castle — where Shakespeare's Macbeth met his downfall. Danson said he would be "extremely shocked" if he saw the Loch Ness monster, but if he did he would keep it a secret.

Chinese actress: Hollywood can wait

NEW YORK (AP) — China's leading actress Gong Li is known for her feminist roles, so it's no surprise she says sexist Hollywood can wait. "Up to now, I haven't seen any interesting parts," she says in the March issue of Premiere magazine. "If you want me to be a 'hua ping' (literally 'flower vase,' or 'bimbo') in a movie dominated by men — why would I bother? There are plenty of films I could do in China." The 30-year-old actress' credits include Raise the Red Lantern, The Story of Qiu Ju, Ju Dou and most recently the possible Academy Award contender Shanghai Triad. After years together, Gong ended her romance with director Zhang Yimou, who made most of her films. She was angry he wouldn't marry her, but has a new boyfriend now and has said she and Zhang may work together again.

Baderas joins Madonna for Evita

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina (AP) — Spanish movie star Antonio Banderas arrived Saturday to join pop singer Madonna and director Alan Parker filming the musical Evita. Banderas, who came with his wife Melanie Griffith and her two children, waved and smiled to reporters at the airport, but refused to answer questions. The actor will play the role of revolutionary leader Che Guevara from the musical play on which the movie is based. Madonna arrived in Argentina earlier this month.

Queen Latifah arrested on drug charges

LOS ANGELES (R) — American actress and rapper Queen Latifah was arrested on drug and weapons charges Saturday after officers stopped her for speeding and allegedly found marijuana and a loaded pistol in her car. California Highway Patrol spokesman Gary Goldenberg said officers stopped the actress, whose real name is Dana Owens, at 6:25 a.m. (1125 GMT) driving 120 kilometres per hour. "Upon contacting Miss Owens one of the officers could smell the odour of burnt marijuana," Mr. Goldenberg said. "He asked Miss Owens if she had been smoking and she said yes." Mr. Goldenberg said Owens, the 25-year-old star of Fox-TV's "Living Single," then admitted to having both marijuana and a pistol in the car.

Brutal cold snap sweeps across U.S.

CHICAGO (R) — Brutal Arctic weather swept across most of the United States Saturday, with three quarters of the country shivering in sub-zero temperatures as the death toll mounted due to the cold snap.

In Chicago at least seven people have died in the past few days in fires while trying to keep warm. Houston police said a 53-year-old man died Friday when his clothes caught fire from burning coals he was using to keep warm in his apartment.

Television stations cautioned residents against such problems as "eyelash freeze" and warned that the killer cold could freeze jewelry to flesh.

The Winter Carnival Parade in St. Paul, Minnesota, was hit by the withdrawals of high school marching bands whose trumpet, tuba and French horn players were afraid their lips would freeze to their instruments.

Record lows were reported across the country. In Lincoln, Nebraska, it was minus 21 degrees Fahrenheit (minus 30 Celsius) — the lowest temperature recorded in 110 years.

In International Falls, Minnesota, the thermometer plunged to minus 30 degrees F (minus 34 C), but with the windchill factor it was much colder.

In Chicago, where the mayor declared a cold weather emergency Friday, it was minus 16 degrees (minus 26 C) overnight.

Demand for heating soared and Northern Illinois Gas asked residential customers to turn down thermostats to 65 degrees (19 C) or lower as they struggled to keep pace with soaring usage.

Peoples Gas Light and Coke Co., which serves 839,000 Chicago customers, said demand was almost double that of a normal winter day.

Illinois Gov. Jim Edgar announced the release of \$5.2 million in federal funds to be used to reconnect heating for residents whose gas or electricity had been cut off due to failure to pay bills.

Motoring organisations were also struggling to cope. The Minneapolis office of the American Automobile Association reported 250 calls an hour, almost eight times the normal pace with waits for a tow truck of up to 10 hours.

The cold snap led to chaos on Texas roads, with five deaths reported on ice-slickened highways since Thursday.

Even in the southern state of Georgia, a state of emergency was declared by Gov.

Zell Miller for the northern third of the state after a winter storm knocked out power, iced roads and downed trees and utility poles.

Forecasters at privately-owned Weather Services Corporation said the Arctic winds would shift from the midwest to the east over the next few days, providing some relief early next week for those shivering at home.

Washington was blanketed in 6 to 8 inches (15-20 cm) of snow — way lower than last month's snowfall which caused federal government to close down and paralysed air, road and rail travel in the area.

In New York, officials expected up to 10 inches (25 cm) of snow. Average annual snowfall is about 14 inches (35 cm) in New York, but the city has already had 45 inches (113 cm) so far this year.

Canadians shiver

Canadians shivered Saturday as frigid Arctic air shattered temperature records and tested the country's resolve in its annual battle against winter.

In Ontario, Canada's most-populous province, low temperature records were broken in several cities as a cold front blew in from western Canada this weekend.

Icy weather has gripped the Canadian prairies for several weeks and turned cars into iceboxes, threatened cattle herds and forced people to huddle inside their homes.

In Alberta, cattle ranchers are covering the ears of newborn calves to ward off frostbite.

Dave Small, a weather specialist with Environment Canada in Toronto, said a continental Arctic air mass has blanketed the country from coast to coast.

"As a result we have record-breaking temperatures running in the minus 30s (Celsius) and minus 40s," Mr. Small said in an interview.

The coldest spot in Canada early Saturday was Shepherd Bay, North West Territories, where temperatures sank to minus 54 degrees Fahrenheit (minus 48 degrees C).

Shepherd Bay is about 1,000 kilometres northwest of the territorial capital of Yellowknife.

In Toronto, which has seen lows of minus 11 degrees (-24 degrees C), two homeless men froze to death on the streets of Canada's largest city last week despite the fact there are empty beds in many hostels.



The sun shines deceptively over Chicago's lakefront as temperatures hovered around -15 degrees Fahrenheit at mid-day Saturday. Temperatures, which have set new record lows throughout the midwest, are expected to warm slightly over the next few days

Keating gets more bad news ahead of elections

SYDNEY (R) — Australian Prime Minister Paul Keating, well behind in opinion polls ahead of the March 2 general election, was dealt a further blow Sunday when the conservative opposition looked set to win a key by-election.

Mr. Keating, trying to put behind him a first week's campaigning dominated by a confident opposition leader John Howard, was attempting to put a brave face on his Labour Party's performance in the Queensland state seat of Mundingburra.

Both Mr. Keating and Mr. Howard played down the importance of Saturday's poll in Labour-held Mundingburra, with the final outcome not likely to be known until Tuesday, but political analysts said the likely Liberal victory could not be dismissed.

A Liberal triumph, with their candidate Frank Tanti holding a handy 800-vote lead at the close of counting Sunday, would plunge Queensland into political crisis, casting an unwanted shadow over the federal polls campaign.

The ruling Labour Party would lose its one-seat majority giving both the Labour and Liberal parties 44 seats each in the state parliament with an independent holding the balance of power.

The independent, Liz Cunningham, has frequently voted with the opposition since her election last July, but has refused to say during the campaign who would gain her support in the event of a hung parliament.

The independent's decision will lead to either Labour retaining power in the state, the coalition taking power on the invitation of the state governor, or a new election.

Queensland's Labour Premier Wayne Goss said the likely result in the seat was disappointing and did not bode well for the federal Labour Party in its fight to hold seats in Queensland in the March 2 poll.

Mr. Keating, eight percentage points behind the coalition of Liberal and National parties in opinion polls, tried to distance the federal campaign from Mundingburra.



A group of survivors huddled together after one of the deadliest earthquakes to hit China in years killed over 200 people and injured more than 3,700 others Saturday. Hundreds of soldiers and police, backed by teams of doctors, were searching through the rubble of mud-brick homes and remote mountain villages around the southwestern town of Lijiang for survivors of the tremor measuring 7.0 on the Richter Scale (Reuters photo)

Devastating China quake kills 228, injures 14,000

BEIJING (R) — The deadliest earthquake to hit China in years has killed 228 people, injured 14,000 and left tens of thousands of survivors huddled in freezing weather and jolted by dozens of aftershocks, officials said Sunday.

More than 2,000 People's Liberation Army troops were rushed in to help with rescue work in mountain villages near the epicentre of the tremor in the remote and scenic region of Lijiang, about 2,000 kilometres southwest of Beijing, they said.

The death toll in China's most devastating earthquake since 1988 climbed to 228 Sunday afternoon as rescue teams fanned out into the worst-hit villages in search of survivors, an official at the Lijiang Disaster Coordination Centre said by telephone.

More than 3,700 people were seriously injured and a further 10,000 slightly hurt in the tremor, which measured 7.0 on the Richter Scale and struck Saturday evening when most people were at home for supper or watching television, he added.

"We are really in need of blood, medical equipment and medicines to fight colds and flu," the official said. "And we don't have enough tents for people whose houses have collapsed or who are too afraid to go home," he said. "The weather is cold, it's just about freezing and we are afraid that many people will catch flu."

Three teams of several hundred doctors and nurses have been sent to the rugged area of southwestern Yunnan province that is renowned for the beauty of its scenery, with tiny ancient villages of the Naxi ethnic minority nestled at the foot of Lijiang's snow-capped Jade Dragon Snow Mountain.

Squads of soldiers and police searched for survivors, picking through the rubble of fragile mud-brick homes that crumbled, crushing their inhabitants.

Officials described the earthquake as terrifying. "It was really powerful," one official said. "In our home almost everything fell down and was broken."

Residents rushed out of their homes in panic. Foreign tourists were evacuated from their hotels and spent the night around bonfires in the city square, officials said.

More than 150 aftershocks have been recorded, including 18 measuring more than 4.0 that caused more damage, officials said. Earthquakes of magnitude 6.0 can cause widespread damage.

"Most people are still outside, only a small number have gone home," the official said. "They are too scared."

Buildings of reinforced concrete suffered cracks and many wooden homes were damaged. "The worst-hit were the mud-brick houses. They just collapsed," he said.

In the county seat of Lijiang, about 10 per cent of houses in the picturesque old quarter collapsed and water and power supplies were knocked out. Most telephone lines were cut.

Areas worst hit were 24 towns in the vicinity of Lijiang, which has a total population of about 1.5 million.

The nearby town of Zhongdian, capital of the Daping Tibetan Autonomous Region, was completely cut off from the outside world, the official Xinhua News Agency said.

Servomologists last month forecast several earthquakes measuring 6.0 to 7.0 for the Lijiang region, Xinhua said.

China's most serious earthquake in recent years in 1988 was also in Yunnan, when a tremor measuring 7.6 killed 939 people near the border with Burma and injured nearly 4,000.

Southwestern Yunnan is an area prone to earthquakes and was hit several times last year.

The most recent tremor in Yunnan was an earthquake measuring 6.5 that rocked an area near the provincial capital, Kunming, last October, killing 44 and injuring 247.

Last July, a tremor of 7.3 magnitude rocked Yunnan's Menglian region near the border with Burma, killing 11 and injuring 136.

Taiwan's government said Sunday that it wanted to help Beijing cope with the aftermath of the earthquake.

"We hope through appropriate channels to show our care for the people there. Also, we should consider how to lend an appropriate helping hand," Premier Lien Chan said on state television. He did not say what form the help might take.

Mr. Lien's offer of help came at a time when relations between Taiwan and China, rivals since a civil war split them in 1949, were at a low ebb.

Beijing, which regards Taiwan as a renegade province, has launched several verbal salvos at Taipei in the past week. It refused to deny a report by the New York Times that it plans to attack the island after Taiwan's presidential elections on March 23.

Bilateral ties soured after Taiwan President Lee Teng-hui made a landmark visit to the United States in June last year. Beijing, which claims sovereign authority over all China, says Taiwan is not entitled to international relations.

Beijing has repeatedly threatened to attack Taiwan if it declares independence.

Sri Lanka president says rebels cling to terror tactics

COLOMBO (R) — Sri Lankan President Chandrika Kumaratunga said Sunday that Tamil Tiger rebels, blamed for a massive suicide bomb attack in Colombo last week, were clinging to a "cult of savage terror" despite appeals for peace talks.

"My government remains resolute in its commitment to find a solution to the ethnic question and its tragic and terrible consequences through political means," Mrs. Kumaratunga said in a live televised address to the nation during the island's 48th Independence Day celebrations.

"Yet the LTTE (the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam) continues to obdurately refuse all dialogue and a political solution, clinging to their particular cult of savage terror."

Mrs. Kumaratunga was speaking four days after a Tamil rebel suicide bomber devastated the country's financial core by ramming a truck packed with 200 kilograms of high explosives into the central bank headquarters in Colombo.

Police, who are still conducting rescue operations, said about 80 people were killed and that they expect

to find more bodies trapped beneath tonnes of rubble.

More than 1,200 people were wounded by the blast which Mrs. Kumaratunga blamed on the LTTE, the militia fighting for an independent homeland for minority Tamils in the north and east.

The Tigers, who have hit Colombo targets before in their 13-year war which has killed more than 50,000 people, have denied responsibility.

Independence celebrations were low-key amidst tight security with hardly any spectators present. Mrs. Kumaratunga was ringed by guards wearing body armour beneath their tunics.

Several roads were closed for traffic until the ceremony was over while hundreds of policemen lined the route taken by Mrs. Kumaratunga's motorcade.

"We chose to achieve peace through negotiations," Mrs. Kumaratunga said. "The LTTE compelled us to wage a battle for peace. We shall not hesitate to undertake every action that may be required to defend and implement our programme for peace."

Deputy Defence Minister Anuruddha Ratwatte said

last week the government would intensify military operations against the rebels who have refused to look at a government peace plan devolving extensive power to Tamils to meet their demands for autonomy.

Mrs. Kumaratunga said the vast majority of all Sri Lankan people, together with the entire international community, had "resoundingly approved our initiatives for peace".

Tamil politicians Sunday denounced the suicide bomb attack and urged the government and the Tamil Tigers to resume peace negotiations.

"If the government and the LTTE are really interested in peace, then they have to sit down and discuss it," said Kandiah Premachandran, secretary-general of the moderate Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front.

A Tamil member of parliament from eastern Sri Lanka said the only solution to the ethnic crisis, which has troubled this tiny island country since independence from Britain in 1948, was negotiation.

"In reality, you can't leave the LTTE out of the peace process," he said, request-

ing that his name not be used. "It is time for the LTTE and the government to sit down and talk. The crisis has got into the very fabric of society."

Mrs. Kumaratunga Sunday promoted Mr. Ratwatte to the rank of a full army general as a reward for his efforts against Tamil Tiger rebels.

Mrs. Kumaratunga made Mr. Ratwatte, a retired lieutenant colonel, a full general at an investiture ceremony to coincide with the 48th anniversary of independence.

Mr. Ratwatte, a close relative of Mrs. Kumaratunga, led the army's campaign against the LTTE in their former citadel of Jaffna in the north of the country last year.

Security forces captured Jaffna after nearly 50 days of fighting which left some 2,000 rebels and 500 soldiers dead.

Mrs. Kumaratunga also conferred gallantry awards on some 700 security personnel, several of them posthumously, for battling the LTTE in the past three years.

NATO will expand despite Russian worries — Perry

MUNICH, Germany (R) — U.S. Defence Minister William Perry insisted Sunday that NATO would press ahead with plans to admit new members from Eastern Europe despite Russian objections.

"NATO enlargement is inevitable and if NATO enlargement is the carrot encouraging reforms, then we cannot keep that carrot continually out of reach," he told the annual Wehrkunde meeting of defence experts in Munich.

Mr. Perry's comments came a day after Russian Deputy Defence Minister Andrei Kokoshin warned that NATO expansion could spark a backlash against reforms in his country by sharpening Moscow's suspicions of the alliance's intentions.

Mr. Perry contended that NATO membership for emerging democracies in Eastern Europe could actually boost Moscow's security in the post-cold war era.

He said he told Russian officials that a vibrant, healthy NATO working together with Russia would keep the United States involved in European security, keep Germany bound into the security architecture and avoid isolating Moscow.

"NATO, far from being a threat to Russia, actually contributes to the security of Russia as well as the security of its own members," he said, but added: "When I reached that conclusion, most of the Russians I talked to fell off the cliff."

At last year's Wehrkunde conference, Mr. Perry suggested forging a formal strategic partnership between NATO and Russia that has yet to bear fruit.

But he said he was encouraged by Russian troops' participation in the NATO-led implementation force helping to safeguard the peace accord in Bosnia and held it out as a model for other cooperation ventures.

"We want Russia inside the circle working with us, not outside the circle throwing rocks at us"

Mitchell warns of danger of IRA split

LONDON (R) — Former U.S. Senator George Mitchell, a key player in the Northern Ireland peace process, warned Sunday that the Irish Republican Army could split, with some elements resuming violence.

Sen. Mitchell, who headed an international commission which last month reported on the decommissioning of guerrilla arms, said it was important to start all-party talks on the future of the British-ruled province as soon as possible.

Asked by BBC Television interviewer David Frost whether the IRA might end its 17-month ceasefire and return to violence, Sen. Mitchell replied: "I think there is a danger of a fracture within that organisation."

"It seems clear that not all on the Republican side favour the ceasefire, and the potential for some elements to take direct and violent action, I think, does remain."

However, Sen. Mitchell said he was convinced that Sinn Fein, the IRA's political wing, along with its counterparts on the Protestant side, were committed to progress by peaceful means.

"That's why I believe it is important to draw them further into the democratic process by getting peace negotiations going as soon as possible," he said.

Britain has concluded from Sen. Mitchell's report that the IRA will not hand over their weapons before all-party peace talks get under way.

It has therefore proposed elections to a peace convention as an alternative way for Sinn Fein to prove its good intentions.

Republicans, fearful this could lead to a province-governing assembly dominated by Protestants, have rejected the idea, and it is also being opposed by the Dublin government.

The British and Irish governments will resume efforts to reach an agreement about the next steps towards peace Wednesday when Irish Foreign Minister Dick Spring meets British Northern Ireland Secretary Sir Patrick Mayhew in Dublin.

Sen. Mitchell declined to comment directly on Britain's stance, but said he admired the British and Irish prime ministers, John

Major and John Bruton, and the risks they had taken for peace.

"It would be a tragedy of huge proportions if it now slipped from their grasp, and I think what's needed is a redoubling of effort, a recommitment of energy to try to get past these last series of hurdles on the political track," he said.

Speaking on the same programme, David Trimble, the leader of Northern Ireland's main Protestant party, the Ulster Unionists, said there were already signs of a return to guerrilla activity by the IRA, whose culture, he said, was one of violence.

Referring to the IRA and other extremist Republican organisations, he said: "There is very little element of democratic thought or even political thought within them... They are quintessentially fascist organisations."

Meanwhile, Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams said Sunday the drive for peace in Northern Ireland would not be "capsized" by British intransigence.

Mr. Adams, in a speech at the Pittsburgh Convention Centre, said his party was ready to work with anyone and the chief goal now was to bring the British to the negotiating table.

"All the players are saying that the pursuit of peace will continue, that it is bigger than any personality, and that a historic moment can't be capsized by a domestic squabble," he said.

In Washington Thursday, Mr. Adams met President Bill Clinton, who stressed the need for "rapid progress" toward all-party Northern Irish peace talks. But Mr. Adams said he had received no pressure from the White House to accept the British proposal.

In Pittsburgh, Mr. Adams stressed the economic needs of Northern Ireland, saying that political help could only go so far.

"I'm not here to get money for guns, but I'm asking for investment to help our economy," Mr. Adams told his audience of about 300 people, who paid \$25 apiece for tickets.

Among the economic projects Mr. Adams is pushing is a plan to have a local electric company set up a subsidiary in the north or west part of Belfast, where unemployment rates are highest, according to organisers.

Dhaka gunbattle heightens violence fears ahead of Bangladesh election

DHAKA (AFP) — A gun-

battle Sunday on the Dhaka University campus between student opposition and government supporters heightened fears of worsening violence ahead of Bangladesh's general elections this month.

More than 50 people were injured in clashes around the country and the opposition, led by the Awami League, was to announce plans Monday to step up its campaign against the Feb. 15 elections.

Several hundred students were involved in the gunbattle with sawn off shotguns and pistols at Dhaka University where at least 10 students were injured as they fled the scene, witnesses said.

A photographer said the latest battle erupted after a meeting of student supporters of the Awami League were attacked by rivals belonging to the ruling Bangladesh Nationalist

Party (BNP).

"The clashes have spread across the campus and police have sealed off roads leading to area," he said. Police fired tear gas in an attempt to separate the warring factions, witnesses said.

Other poll linked violence was reported in Dhaka, and Chittagong and Cox's Bazar in southeast Bangladesh, Sunamganj district in the northeast, Pabna district in the west, Kishoreganj and in the river port town of Chandpur.

Opposition activists went on a rampage in Chittagong Sunday, damaging at least 100 vehicles. Around 15 panicky passengers were injured, witnesses said.

Political violence during the 22 months of the opposition campaign to bring down Prime Minister Khaleda Zia has left nine dead and several hundred injured. But tension has

mounted in recent days.

The opposition has already announced plans to disrupt the election campaign in Chittagong, Rajshahi and Dinajpur districts in coming days.

When Mrs. Khaleda defied strikes in Sylhet and Khulna, resulting violence left one boy dead and injuring scores more.

More than 300 students and police were injured during a pitched battle at Dhaka University last week when Mrs. Khaleda opened a book fair there.

Several teachers have resigned in protest at the incident and the Dhaka University Teachers' Association condemned the police action.

The Daily Star newspaper accused Mrs. Khaleda over the violence and said she had ignored earlier advice to drop the visit.

Bhutto urges Kashmiri kidnappers to free hostages

ISLAMABAD (AFP) — Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto Sunday appealed to Kashmiri guerrillas holding four Westerners to unconditionally free the "innocent" tourists kidnapped more than six months ago.

Ms. Bhutto made the appeal during a nationally televised address a day before a government-sponsored countrywide general strike to demonstrate solidarity with Muslim separatist groups fighting against Indian rule in Kashmir.

Rallies have been planned by Pakistani ruling and opposition parties for Monday, which has been declared a public holiday throughout the country by the government, as on similar occasions in the past.

The observance this year

closely follows a Jan. 26 rocket attack on a mosque on the Pakistani side in Kashmir that left 20 people dead and rekindled mutual tensions. Islamabad has blamed the attack on Indian troops, but New Delhi has denied the accusation.

"During this holy month of Ramadan (Muslim fasting month) I call upon the kidnappers to unconditionally release the hostages and put an end to this incident which has harmed the cause of Kashmiris," she said.

"They should release these innocent tourists if they have any love for the Kashmiri people," she said.

Britons Paul Wells, 23, and Keith Mangan, 33, and American Donald Hutchings, 42, were kidnapped by the shadowy Al-Faraj group on July 4 while trekking in the Himalayas in

the Indian-administered southern two-thirds of Kashmir.

German Dirk Hasert was seized on July 8, the same day as Norwegian Hans-Christian Ostro, who was killed by the kidnappers in August.

Al-Faraj has demanded the release of 15 imprisoned Muslim militants in exchange for the four hostages, but has not been in contact with the Indian authorities since Nov. 26.

Ms. Bhutto reiterated Pakistani suspicions about Al-Faraj, saying "we do not know whether it is an Indian counter-intelligence unit or a breakaway group of Kashmiri fighters."

She vowed continued support for the Kashmiri "freedom struggle," but said Pakistan was ready for negotiations with India to

resolve the Kashmir dispute.

More than 12,000 people have been killed during the five-year old Muslim separatist campaign in Indian-controlled Kashmir, which Pakistan sees as a legitimate struggle for self-determination.

India accuses Pakistan, which controls the northern third of the disputed Himalayan region, of arming and training the insurgents. Islamabad denies the charge.

"Every Pakistani man, woman and child is with their Kashmiri brethren and shall remain with them till our last breath," Ms. Bhutto said, warning that the subcontinent would not achieve peace until the Kashmir issue is solved.

Indian parties at odds over Kashmir elections

NEW DELHI (AFP) — A meeting of Indian parties to discuss elections in Kashmir ended in a deadlock with leftists and others shooting down government plans for early polls in the strife-torn state, officials said Sunday.

The Communist Party of India and its Marxist allies sided with Kashmir's regional National Conference Party at the two-day meet, which ended overnight, to oppose plans for early elections, they said.

Home Minister S. B. Chavan said the final decision would be taken by Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao, whose ruling Congress (I) Party has called for Kashmir polls ahead of general elections

this year. "There has been a sea-change in the situation in Kashmir," Mr. Chavan told the all-party meeting Saturday night, asserting that Muslim militancy in strife-torn Kashmir was on the wane.

More than 12,000 people have died in Kashmir, India's only Muslim-majority state, since 1989 when the Muslim separatist campaign took off. Tens of thousands of federal troops are deployed in the region.

Officials said leftist and conference leaders at the meeting demanded a political package for Kashmiris before the unveiling of dates for the polls in the state in a bid to cool down the anti-Indian rebellion

there.

"The political package should then be ratified by parliament to create a sense of confidence among the people of the state," said Yusuf Tarigami, who led a Communist Party of India (Marxist) delegation to the meeting.

"Elections should be announced only after parliament has ratified it," Mr. Tarigami added, but did not say if the government agreed to extend political concessions to the people in Kashmir, which is under federal rule since 1990.

Parooq Abdullah, Conference leader and a former state chief minister, said the package should specify the quantum of autonomy the government

was ready to give to the Kashmiris before ordering the legislative polls.

Sources said the centrist Janata Dal (People's Party) reportedly supported the ruling Congress Party on its demands for the provincial balloting ahead of the parliamentary elections, which would be held latest by May.

Representatives of Hindus driven out from Kashmir by the Muslim insurgency also opposed the government's plans for immediate elections saying the present situation in Kashmir had little room for fair and free balloting.

"There was no consensus and now it seems the ball is in the prime minister's court," said one official

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Team with a mission

THERE IS no doubt that the task awaiting Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti and his colleagues, as spelled out in His Majesty King Hussein's letter of appointment, is an awesome one. Mr. Kabariti and his government, the King ordained, are expected to effect a "white revolution" in the country that should take Jordan solidly into the 21st century. Reading through the King's letter and Mr. Kabariti's reply we can only be hopeful at the prospects of a prosperous, strong and modernised Jordan that would assume a leading role in taking the whole Middle East forward.

Although we appreciate the constraints that the prime minister-designate had to work under in forming his team, we cannot but echo the first reactions of many people who thought that apart from Mr. Kabariti himself and a handful or so of ministers with proven abilities, the set-up of the new Cabinet did not meet initial high expectations. The main constraint that Mr. Kabariti had to work under is of course his need to pass the first hurdle in a democratic process, a vote of confidence by the Lower House of Parliament. Hence the inclusion of so many deputies in the Cabinet, totalling a record 22.

These ministers represent the different governorates and parliamentary blocs, minus, of course, the Islamic Action Front. While their inclusion in such large numbers may not add to the fortunes of the government in bringing about the required change, we remain hopeful that some change will take place through the leadership qualities that the prime minister enjoys. We count on him to lead his team to as close as we can get to achieve the noble aims set by the King in his letter of appointment.

Jordanians will give the new team the benefit of the doubt, even though some of us will undoubtedly prejudge it on the strength of who went in and came out. The yardstick that we should all use to measure success of the government in the end, however, is the policies that it will adopt and the amount of work that it will do in order to implement them.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

FOR THE second day running and while the Prime Minister Designate Abdul Karim Kabariti is trying to form a government, a writer for Al Ra'i daily said the Jordanians are not as much interested in the faces of the new ministers as much as they are keen on seeing a government with ministers willing to tackle chronic issues at the domestic level. Sultan Al Hatab said that the Jordanians wish to see their domestic problems solved and not accumulating, while ministers continue to make empty promises to solving them. He said that under the previous governments, and during the state of war with Israel, the Jordanians were deprived of freedom of expression and criticism, of equality of the chance to build a productive society and a state of institutions. The writer stressed the fact that Jordanians will continue to demand a government that would present the public with clear socio-economic programmes and not one that continues to find excuses and justifications for failing to perform its duty. He said Jordan is in need of a government that accepts challenge and works towards fulfilling the dreams of the Jordanian people in an atmosphere of genuine democracy and reform.

NAWAF ZARU, a columnist for Al Dustour, said that the Israeli war against the Palestinians has not ended with the signing of the Oslo agreement and the creation of the self-rule areas in Palestine. The Israelis continue to launch attacks on the members of the Islamic Jihad, Hamas and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, among others, and they have a free hand to move in and out of all Palestinian areas regardless of the Palestine National Authority's self-rule. Recent reports spoke of recurrent attacks carried out by Israeli security services against those Palestinians who oppose the Oslo deal and the peace process with Israel under various pretexts, said the writer. He asked what kind of peace is that which allows the Israelis to continue their war against the Palestinians and deprives them of the right to self-defence.

Human Rights File

When reservations are counterproductive

By Dr. Waleed M. Sa'di

THE EASIEST way for states to shirk their obligations under international treaties or to stay away from global programmes of action, like last year's Beijing Conference on Women, is to enter into reservations on certain controversial paragraphs that are in conflict with or repugnant to their respective religions or cultures.

This is exactly what the Jordanian and other delegations from developing, and even developed, countries opted to do at the world conference on women when signing and ratifying international conventions in order to appear as faithful adherents to such instruments yet remain free from having to observe all their vital provisions.

Still, there is hardly a consensus among international lawyers on the effect of reservations which have been on the rise of late, in the wake of increased activity on the international level.

On the one hand, there is the concern that depriving states of the privilege of registering a reservation could drive them away from becoming parties to new and progressive international conventions or decisions. On the other hand, there is the equal anxiety that a liberal tolerance of reservations would make a mockery of state commitments and obligations.

The rule that now enjoys the widest support in this regard leans towards accepting a middle course. According to this happy medium, states would be encouraged to jump on the bandwagon of human rights treaties by allowing them a certain leeway to enter their reservations on some benign provisions but would rule out wide-spectrum reservations especially on matters of fundamental importance.

This means that no reservation would be acceptable if its effect interfered with or repudiated the raison d'être of the convention or international programme of action.

The dilemma that the Jordanian delegation to the Beijing conference encountered right from the start was how to appear as a supporter of the quest for equality between the sexes yet remain faithful to Jordanian laws which seem to condone discrimination between the sexes on certain matters, such as inheritance.

The Jordanian team naturally entered reservations on all paragraphs in the final document of the conference that touched not only on inheritance rights of women but went beyond them. Rights of children of Jordanian women, freedom of movement and travel and last, but not least, the right of women to have their own separate national identity cards were all subject to Jordanian reservations.

In this vein, it must be recalled that whereas Islam, as articulated in the Sharia law, ordains that the inheritance rights of women are inferior to those of men in certain areas, there is nothing in the Sharia that prevents children of Jordanian women to obtain the citizenship of their mothers.

It will be recalled that children born to Jordanian men automatically get the citizenship of their fathers under Jordanian law. Likewise, there is nothing in the Sharia that denies women the right to apply for and acquire a separate identity or the right to travel and leave one's country on an equal footing with men.

In other words, there are many areas where discrimination between the sexes can be eliminated without any prejudice to the Sharia law or Islam in general. Any existing legislations that are contrary to the true spirit of our religion must therefore be immediately amended to conform with international norms.

It is the prerogative of Her Royal Highness Princess Basma, the leader of the Jordanian delegation to Beijing last year, to spearhead the campaign for such changes as soon as possible.

In any case, the public needs to know a lot more about what had transpired in Beijing, including some more specific information on the articles on which our delegation had to register a reservation.

There was one specific important television interview with Dr. Amal Farhan, one of the key members of our national delegation, on the Jordanian stance throughout the deliberations of the conference and it certainly had shed much light on its proceedings.

Still, a great deal remains to be done in view of the national priority that we have all placed on the international meeting. Suffice it to recall that the global gathering was addressing issues that relate to half of the world's population.

Since we all agree that Beijing was some sort of a watershed for women rights, we are entitled to more national deliberations and reflections on its results. Several months have elapsed since the adoption of the meeting's final document, but not much has been said or done on the local scene to translate the main features of that historic act into practice.

Admittedly, we have many important issues on our national agenda that also await consideration, but I cannot think of a more pressing one than women's rights.

Kabariti and opposition

(Continued from page 1)

been at loggerheads since the signing of the October 1994 Jordan-Israel peace treaty, the Islamist source said.

Much of the tension created between the IAF and the government of Sharif Zeid was a direct consequence of what the Islamists perceive to be the outgoing Cabinet's "intolerance" of the opposition despite attempts at dialogue between the two sides which mostly ended up in a confrontation and measures by the authorities to restrict the opposition's movement in initially fighting the peace accord with Israel and then fighting normalisation of relations with the Jewish state.

Mr. Kabariti, politicians say, has learnt from the experience of Sharif Zeid's government, and is, therefore, going in the opposite direction where relations with the Islamists are concerned in order to avoid "unnecessary tension" that would reflect negatively on the work of his new team.

Mr. Kabariti, who lobbied against Dr. Arabiyat, the Islamist former Lower House speaker in 1991 in favour of Taher Masri, and labelled Islamist deputies as anti-progressive, has managed to maintain "cordial and friendly relations" with the Islamists since then.

Analysts believe that the "mutually beneficial understanding between Mr. Kabariti and the Islamists" would not only help the new government secure a wide-based parliamentary support but also avoid attempts by the opposition to undermine his government in carrying out its mandate. The fresh understanding can likewise serve his policy of improving relations with some Arab countries, particularly Kuwait, through parliamentary dialogue between the emirate's and Jordan's Islamist deputies, who have good relations, some sources told the Jordan Times.

According to these sources, Mr. Kabariti told the Islamists on Saturday meeting that "the continuity of the Islamic movement is part of the regime's continuity," and that "the government's relations with the (Islamists) is a strategic (one)."

Mr. Kabariti on Saturday also met with Al Ahd's head Abdul Hadi Majali, for consultations on the make-up of his government. The meeting, according to informed sources, was aimed at sending a message to Mr. Majali, whose relations with Mr. Kabariti had not particularly been strong, that he wanted to work together with the 17-member parliamentary bloc that Mr. Majali heads.

Part of the tension between the two was caused by Mr. Kabariti's refusal to join, as foreign minister, the government of former Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali, who had the support of Al Ahd, headed

by his brother Abdul Hadi and his parliamentary bloc.

Although Mr. Kabariti has enemies and rivals inside and outside Parliament, his "smooth and diplomatic" personality drove even the most outspoken among them, like Deputy Toujan Faisal, who had criticised him on a number of policy issues to welcome his appointment as prime minister.

Ms. Faisal, like many of her leftist colleagues in the House, had disapproved of Mr. Kabariti's policies towards change in the Iraqi regime, for example, but

the two "managed to put differences aside solely based on recognition by her of (Mr. Kabariti's) leadership qualities," as one analyst put it.

Mr. Kabariti, the analyst said, did not work against leftists in Parliament as "they were not influential enough to cause any obstruction to his goals; they had no hard feelings against him."

The new prime minister, fellow deputies say, is respected and liked by even those politicians who disapprove of his policies, adding that Mr. Kabariti separates personal relations from politics, thus appearing at times to be working against some of his friends, while, in fact, he is

working to attain a certain goal which he believes serves national interest. These deputies cited as evidence the election as Lower House Speaker Sa'd Hayel Srour, whom Mr. Kabariti backed and lobbied for, consequently weakening support for his (Srour's) potential rivals, Ali Abul Ragheb and Taher Masri, who withdrew from the race before the House vote.

"He is a true politician with an agenda and works hard to meet it," said one deputy close to Mr. Kabariti, adding that the prime minister "has managed to befriend all his colleagues in the House regardless of their political orientation."

meeting at the Barcelona conference in November last year, which he attended as foreign minister, he drank, by mistake, the glass of water belonging to the Lebanese counterpart Farez Bouez, who was sitting to his right.

Mr. Bouez, realising what Mr. Kabariti had done, showed a slight sign of protest, only to see the Jordanian foreign minister turn left, pick up the glass of water placed in front of Israeli Foreign Minister Ehud Barak, and hand it over to Mr. Bouez, who drank it. Seeing that, Mr. Barak sent a note to Mr. Kabariti, congratulating him for succeeding in launching the first cooperation between Israel and Lebanon on water issues.

Mr. Kabariti's political opponents, who fought him tooth and nail, say he is aggressive, sometimes reckless and manipulative and often single-minded. But even those respect him and admire his abilities.

A member of the Muslim Brotherhood, who admits he was opposed to Mr. Kabariti's peace policies and his aggressive stance vis-a-vis Iraq, says he likes the man as a person. "Abu Awn is a decent man, not only because he doesn't drink and he doesn't smoke," he says. "He is humble and close to the people... I think he is a good man... even Toujan Faisal, who never praised anybody in her life, thinks he is a good man."

Mr. Kabariti says that he has learned a lot from his father. One of the things he told him was: "Do not pull out your gun unless you plan to use it." In other words, know your limitations and do not enter a losing battle.

Mr. Kabariti's sense of humour and informal touch is also noted. During a

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Another friend says the man never gives up, and once he achieves a goal, he moves on to another. "There is no limit to his stamina. He simply cannot give up and cannot be cornered. If he is challenged or slighted, he charges like a raging bull, crushing his opponents. This is why he is described as a political bulldozer."

A friend of his describes his style: "He sets a seemingly unrealistic goal, then his whole being works in the direction of achieving it. In the process, he recruits followers and supporters at a whim, uses his noted power of persuasion and deftly undermines his baffled detractors. In short, a master lobbyist, a brilliant

Premier known for drive

(Continued from page 1)

very pleasant on the outside, very tough on the inside... he is a very solid person."

His close friends say he is a good listener, and an articulate speaker. His ability to win friends and rally followers earned him the admiration of his friends and foes alike. His perseverance, combined with a keen knowledge of human nature, helped him in his meteoric rise to the top.

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Parliamentary base of government rises

By Sa'eda Kilani
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Mainstream parliamentary blocs are more represented in the Cabinet of Abdul Karim Kabariti than his predecessor Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker and contrary to expectations, the number of deputies soared from 17 to 22.

With the exception of the 16-member National Action Front (NAF) bloc, whose number of ministers decreased from five to four, other parliamentary blocs either maintained the same number of ministers or increased its weight.

The National Action Front bloc, led by Minister of Public Works and Construction Abdul Hadi Majali (Karak), now include in addition to Mr. Majali: Mifkeh Ruheini (Jerash), Hashem Dabbas (Salt) and Abdul Hafez Shabanbeh (Madaba). In the Sharif Zeid government, NAF members were five. They were: Abdul Majid Azzam (Irbid), Taha Hababeh (Shobak), Rateb Saoud (Tafilah), Nader Abul Sha'er (Irbid) and Mansour Ben Tarif (Karak).

The bloc with the biggest representation was, however, the Democratic Parliamentary Coalition with six out of its seven members becoming ministers. The only member in the coalition who was not given a portfolio in the new government was Lower House of Parliament Speaker Sa'd Hayel Srour. In addition to Premier Kabariti, who is a member himself in the coalition, the appointed ministers are: Samir Ka'war (Salt), Saleh Irshadat (Irbid), Aref Bataineh (Irbid), Hamad Abu Jamous (Amman) and Munir Sobar (Amman). In the former government there were four: Mr. Ka'war, Mr. Irshadat, Mr. Bataineh and Mr. Kabariti.

Also, some former members of the coalition who are now independents have become ministers in Mr. Kabariti's government. They include: Mohammed Daoudieh (Tafilah), Mustafa Sheikhat (Salt), Abdul Karim Dughmi (Mafrag) and Ali Abul Ragheb (Amman), who was

also a minister in Sharif Zeid's government. The nine-member Jordanian National Front, led by former Minister of Education Abdul Raouf Rawabdeh, maintained the same number of ministers — two. They are: Mohammed Salem Thoubet (Amman) and Mohammed Njadat (South Bedouins). In the former government, the front's ministers were Mr. Rawabdeh and Jamal Khreisha (Central Bedouins).

The parliamentary Fraternity bloc, which is a coalition of five deputies, had one minister in the previous government and it retained one ministerial post in the new cabinet — Mahmoud Hweini (Jordan Valley) in the new one, and Nader Thuhairat (Northern Ghor) in the former cabinet.

The four-member Constitutional Bloc, which was formed after the Sharif Zeid government was announced, has one minister in the new government — Ahmad Qudab (Ajloun). The 17-member Islamic Action Front Party bloc said it will not participate in Mr. Kabariti's government and did not participate in Sharif Zeid's government. The remaining ministers who are also deputies are independents. They are: Abdullah Ensour (Salt), Abdul Razzaq Tubeishat (Irbid), Jamal Sarairoh (Karak) and Awad Khleifat (Shobak). Former independent deputies/ministers who were not included in the new formation are Mohammed Abu Olein (Mafrag) and Samir Habashneh (Karak).

The new government includes eight ministers from the north, eight from the south and 10 from Al Wasat (middle Jordan). There are one Circassian, two Christians and five Jordanians of Palestinian origin.

Seven ministers hail from bedouin origins: two from Bani Hassan, tribes concentrated around and east of Zarqa; two from Bani Abbad from Central Jordan; one from the Daajah of Amman; one from the Lawzis also of Amman; and one from the Huwaitat tribes in southern Jordan.

Now Mr. Kabariti is expected to shift to a less confrontational style as a prime minister, partly to avoid fuelling the Jordanian opposition groups' rhetoric but also because his new job as a prime minister would not allow him the same manoeuvrability that he enjoyed as foreign minister.

One of his priorities, well-informed analysts say, is to pursue a two-pronged policy that would simultaneously improve ties with Israel and the Palestinian National Authority — in an attempt to strike some kind of balance especially that the Palestinians are wary of Jordan's warm relations with the Jewish state.

As prime minister, he would most probably work to strike a permanent balance between the goals of Jordan's foreign policy and avoiding serious frictions at home.

One observer, however, says that although Prime Minister Kabariti may be a prime minister, he can work as a close relation to King Hussein, who is a close relation to the King.

King to Kabariti: Work for 'pure white revolution' in pushing for comprehensive change in system of government

Following is an official translation of the letter of designation given by His Majesty King Hussein to Prime Minister Abdul Karim Al Kabariti:

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

His Excellency, our brother, Abdul Karim Al Kabariti, may God protect and keep him. I present to you an Arab, Hashemite greeting, and furthermore,

IT HAS been God's favour to his humble servant, to will that I serve this sacred country, and lead the noble Arab Jordanian people, for more than 42 years. I have lived this period, from my early youth, proud of my belonging to Jordan, my love for it, my knowledge of it, and my feel for its pulse throughout my life. As I charge you with forming and leading my new cabinet, I do so from my knowledge of you from the years of your university studies and until the present day. I know the sincerity of your commitment to your country, your qualities, your purity, your loyalty, and your courage.

You are among the men that hold their heads high, and never bow down except to the Almighty God; the men whose spirits do not shrink from fulfilling their duty, and do not cower before the challenge that it poses.

My decree requires that the cabinet consist of elements that are young, sincere, virtuous, honest, loyal, and capable, by God's will, of working as one team, and bearing the collective responsibility. It should reflect the lofty ambitions of the young, that are also mine, of building a strong Jordan that would be a standard and a model, a country whose citizens hold their heads high, and bow them to none but God. I pray to God that your new cabinet will be blessed with His approbation; with the confidence of the people, and with my confidence; that it should work to mobilise all energies, and draw its pulse from the pulse of the people in all its categories, in the countryside, the desert, and the cities.

The cabinet should not seek to build a tawdry popularity at the expense of the people's progress and prosperity, but interact with and respond to the vast majority, the people of nobility, who have given me their love and their trust, in return for which I have devoted my life to them.

I hope that the new cabinet, under your leadership, will devote all its

energy and potential to effect a total and comprehensive overhaul of the state apparatus and its upper echelons, to propagate young people of awareness, in a white and pure revolution that does not deny the efforts and accomplishments of its predecessors who bore their responsibilities and gave of their best. Instead, it should raise the edifice beyond what they have built, and work to revive the spirit of the Great revolt whose message and noble objectives we have inherited in the nation of Shura, democracy, responsible freedom, and the human being that respects his full right to contribute to building his country's strength, solidity, and excellence.

The first of these objectives is to preserve and consolidate the unity of the nation and of all Jordanians in this, the haven of the free, and the hub of the elite, without omitting any rights of its sons and daughters, regardless of their origins.

The second objective is to consolidate our progress towards democracy and responsible freedom, that aims for the best in word and deed, and to safeguard the higher interest of the country and of future generations, renouncing all forms of parochialism, pessimism, and all efforts to erode the credibility of our national progress, the image of our country, its accomplishments, and its future.

The third objective is to make a review of our progress in general, to realise a comprehensive corrective leap. This requires giving the top priority to cooperation among the three authorities of which we have the honour of custodianship. This should be done along the following guidelines:

First: The Armed Forces are the shield of this country and its protector. They merit from us all our attention and care, as we confirm our determination to modernise them and raise their efficiency and capability of outstanding performance, in keeping with their renown, and the august responsibilities that they undertake, whether in protecting the territory, security, and accomplishments of Jordan, or in their participation in international peacekeeping forces in a number of countries.

Second: To conduct a review of all state apparatus which have deteriorated because of the absence of a

role for the private sector in the past years, which compelled the successive governments to undertake, to a large extent, the functions of that sector. We are confident that all the present circumstances and abet such a review, so that the private sector may fulfil its role and its duty effectively, while the government limits itself to overseeing it through an effective and capable apparatus.

Third: The youth are the reserve for the future, and the true wealth of this country. Their energy must be mobilised and channelled to consolidate their sense of belonging to their country, through their habilitation, the development of special programmes for them, organising youth camps, cultivating in them the spirit of initiative, and edifying the virtue of working for their country and their society. Moreover, the return to this country of thousands of educated and qualified young people requires preparation to absorb the best among them in the state apparatus. We must motivate our young and protect them from frustrating influences, whether these influences emanate from their superiors who stifle them through their fear that young people constitute a menace to them, or through the bad example that these superiors embody. We must open the road for the capable and efficient among our youth to progress in all fields, to achieve an efficient state apparatus where the good are rewarded, while the bad and unproductive are uprooted.

Fourth: In the field of education, we must, within our means, work constantly to improve the situation of teachers and schools, so that education can evolve from the state of teaching and learning by heart, to that of interaction with laboratories and computers, and openness to the world, while concentrating on national awareness, so that the youth may know in which state their country was, what it has become, and where they are heading. We must deal at the pre-university stage, with the present phenomenon where thousands graduate from universities every year, only to join the ranks of the unemployed, where their hopes are dashed, and their ambitions frustrated. Moreover, universities must be allowed to set for themselves the criteria for enrolment of their students, which would guarantee that the best and most capable will be qualified, in accordance with the country's need of these qualifications. Moreover, since work is a duty, a right, and an honour, I believe strongly that we suffer from an imbalance in the labour market. It is inconceivable that Jordan should accommodate a number of immigrant labourers greater than that of unemployed Jordanians, whether this may be due to their lack of qualification, or because they have been ignored till after their university education.

Fifth: In the field of agriculture, it is necessary to make a review of the volume and performance of this sector, and the qualifications that it comprises, to make it compatible with the agricultural area that it serves. We have remarked over the past years that the methods of agriculture and marketing make land a burden to its owner rather than a source of income as it should be, so that he may cherish it like his lifeblood, and reap rewards for his efforts and care. Either that, or we accept the present orientation to lease land to immigrant workers, or dispose of it altogether.

Sixth: We must also rid ourselves of the stifling bureaucratic routine in state institutions, which impedes work and repels incoming investment. We must eliminate all manifestations of nepotism and corruption wherever they may be found, while keeping aware that much of what is spread about the existence of such practices is the work of some who seek to disfigure the image of this country, to malign it, and undermine its achievements.

Seventh: We wish to express our pride in the judicial system of Jordan, and to assert our constant care to safeguard its independence, to raise its efficiency, and to provide peace of mind in all its forms to all who work in it. An honest judiciary is the basis of security, and stability. It is the safeguard of people's rights and property, that consolidates their sense of belonging.

Eighth: We also wish to express our pride in our security services, which we have founded on a basis of virtue, high morality, and concern for the security of the country and its citizens. We wish to form, within the apparatus of the public security and the Ministry of Interior, offices for internal control to supervise the performance of these agencies, to maintain discipline, avoid errors and excesses anywhere, and to follow up on complaints by the citizens or on contraventions should any occur.

Ninth: Our progress towards democracy is a way of life, which we have adopted, though it is not new to us. The Founder, my grandfather, may God bless his soul, broke the path for this progress, and we follow in his tracks, in working to consolidate our achievements and build up on them, so that our democracy may be, as we have wished it, a model and an example, and so that Jordan may stay always the haven of the free, and the bastion of responsible freedom, sincere pluralism, and respect for human rights, all of which spring from our faith, and the principles of the Great Arab Revolt. We shall protect this blessed process from any sabotage or slander, under any pretext.

Tenth: The Royal Jordanian Airlines has undertaken an important role in bearing the bright image of Jordan to the world. It is one of the state institutions of which we are proud. It merits from us every care and attention, so that it may overcome its difficulties and fulfil its functions with the efficacy that we desire.

Eleventh: We think it important that immediate and effective steps should be taken to safeguard our historical and archaeological sites which form part not only of our heritage but also of human heritage at large. Protecting this heritage is a duty we owe to coming generations. We also believe that consideration should be given to developing tourism in a balanced way thereby ensuring that its benefits will flow into the national economy without causing adverse effects on the environment.

Twelfth: Our foreign policy has always been, and will stay, God willing, founded on a broad base of international legitimacy, embodied by our respect for the objectives and the rules of the United Nations Charter, particularly those that deal with the respect, due by every state, for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all other states, and with the preservation of basic human rights, including the right to self-determination. We shall work to consolidate our relations with all states and regional groups, including the European Union, on the basis of mutual respect and common interests.

In the field of inter-Arab relations, we assert our keen interest to maintain fraternal relations with our Arab brothers, based on mutual trust and respect, and emanating from our common bonds, and the dictates of our commitment to the Charter of the Arab

Prime minister pledges full adherence to directives

IN HIS reply letter to the letter of designation, Mr. Kabariti said his government would be guided by the Royal directives and the King's transparent vision in carrying out the responsibilities entrusted with it at this crucial stage of Jordanian and Arab history.

Mr. Kabariti said Jordan had joined the Middle East peace process to achieve a better future for this and the coming generations.

The prime minister said Jordan, since the Madrid peace conference, entered a race of challenge for change, development and rehabilitation that would enable Jordan to maintain its reliable pioneering position, which the King has always sought to achieve.

Jordan joined the Middle East peace process to achieve a better future for this and the coming generations, and therefore "we had to shoulder the responsibilities of peace and reap its fruit, by the same vision, courage and initiative upon which King Hussein based his decision to join the peace march in order to save the homeland, protect the land and rights and safeguard its achievements."

Mr. Kabariti said the

King had been able, through his vision and genuine desire, to mobilise the will for genuine change, and "has enabled the political, economic, social and information institutions to work for change in an atmosphere of political pluralism and democracy, thus bringing about a genuine change, rather than a cosmetic change," he said.

Mr. Kabariti lauded Jordan's achievements in the economic and political spheres, noting the successes achieved by the economic reform and political pluralism programmes.

Mr. Kabariti said it was high time for the private sector to play a bigger role in easing the government's burden, enabling the government to dedicate its efforts to addressing welfare, reduction of poverty, and providing job opportunities for the young people.

Mr. Kabariti called on the private sector to utilise the investment opportunities made available to it and to increase production.

He stressed the need for exploring regional and international scopes which have been opened through the international credibility that King Hussein enjoys worldwide.

He stressed the importance of rational dialogue which is based on figures, information and mutual respect in securing the future that the country has long sought to achieve.

"Taking about open institutional dialogue prompts us to hope for a new dictionary of transparent, warm and genuine daily language, not only between the legislative and executive powers but also between the participating citizens and the various sectors of the political spectrum, including individuals, parties, universities, educational centres and mass media," Mr. Kabariti said.

He called for adopting dialogue as a method for democratic education, saying that it should form a part of "our national identity and a basis for dialogue on internal policies and for dialogue with others, be they brethren, neighbouring countries or international economic groupings."

Mr. Kabariti said the five years that followed Iraq's invasion of Kuwait substantiated Jordan's belief that the nation's problems cannot be solved except through inter-Arab dialogue and decisions.

On inter-Arab relations, Mr. Kabariti said his government would follow the same approach of Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker had charted.

Mr. Kabariti said his government would work to clean inter-Arab relations from "any impurities resulting from the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait," adding that the government would work with Arab brothers to achieve Arab solidarity and unify Arab fold on the basis of new and constructive bases.

Mr. Kabariti said his government would direct special attention to improving performance and increasing efficiency, in addition to finalising the legal measures needed to protect and encourage investments and will facilitate the settlement of commercial disputes when they arise, in addition to protecting intellectual property in the various fields, and preventing monopoly.

The government will also fight the acquisition and accumulation of wealth by illegal means and abuse of authority.

Mr. Kabariti said his government will direct special attention to the Armed

Forces and will provide it with advanced weapons and provide all means needed to enable them to continue to perform their role in protecting the country, and safeguarding regional security.

On cooperation with the legislative power, Mr. Kabariti said his government would respect the opinion of the legislative power and the resolutions passed by the Lower House of Parliament, which represents democracy and its genuine title. The government will also make every possible effort to enhance Jordan's democratic march, which is based on the Constitution and the National Charter and which respects the opinion of the majority and reflects its aspirations," Mr. Kabariti said. He added that the government would provide every possible support to the judiciary and strengthen its cadres with a view to enabling it to perform its role in a manner that commensurates with Jordan's endeavours to expand its ties and contacts with the European Union, the United States and Japan, in addition to other economic groupings.

Jordan and Kuwait move to heal rift

(Continued from page 12)

erred by sympathising with Iraq after it troops invaded Kuwait in 1990.

Sheikh Saad has explained his stand by saying he is merely following anti-Jordanian opinion among ordinary Kuwaitis who accused Jordanians living in Kuwait of siding with the occupier.

Kuwait downgraded diplomatic relations and cut off aid to Jordan and several other Arab states who sympathised with Baghdad during its seven-month occupation.

Kuwait's ties with Jordan have been improving sporadically since August 1995 when Amman gave asylum to two Iraqi defectors and abandoned diplomatic support for the Iraqi government.

Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmad Al Sabah later met the Jordanian Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Al Kabariti on two occasions and unofficial exchanges were stepped up. The move was in line with U.S. attempts to foster Jordanian-Gulf rapprochement to heighten Baghdad's isolation and reduce Jordanian reliance on Iraqi oil and other trade.

The fence-mending was briefly derailed in December when Sheikh Sabah offered to resign in a thinly-veiled protest at opposition to his policy mounted by Sheikh Saad. Sheikh Sabah withdrew his offer within a day, saying the row had been solved.

Mr. Ghabra was one of several Kuwaiti academics who met Prince Hassan in Amman in January at a symposium of Arab intellectuals held to discuss Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

Mr. Ghabra said he found a favourable attitude towards Kuwait among Jordanian officials and intellectuals and duly reported this back to Kuwaiti officials on his return.

"The mood was extremely positive," said Mr. Ghabra. "There is a change of mood in Jordan, among the elite and in the entire politics of the country."

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Sharif Zeid becomes Prince Zeid

(Continued from page 6)

such by the law" (article 75.1). However, many political observers and analysts noted that traditionally no member of the Royal family having the title of prince has taken on the role of a minister or prime minister.

However, one observer said that "although Prince Zeid cannot be a prime minister again, he can work in the Royal Court."

Prince Zeid is a close relative of King Hussein, who is related to him from the Royal

Sherifian clan of Aoun. His father, Prince Shaker, was bestowed with the title of prince by Sherif Hussein Ben Ali of Mecca. King Hussein's great grandfather Prince Zeid Ben Fawaz was the ruling prince of Taif when Sharif Hussein Ben Ali ruled the Hijaz.

A former chief of the Royal Court and commander-in-chief of the Armed Forces, Prince Zeid formed his first government in 1989, stepping down later that year after overseeing the

first democratic elections in the country since 1956.

He was made prime minister again in October 1991, until the appointment of Abdul Salam Majali in May 1993. He was renamed premier in January 1995, and entrusted with overseeing the implementation of the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty signed four months earlier.

According to a source close to Prince Zeid, the new title is limited to the former premier and excludes his family members.

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Iraq cuts bus fares, food prices because of rising dinar

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Iraqi authorities have slashed public bus fares and food prices because of the rising dinar in anticipation of an oil-for-food deal with the United Nations, officials said Sunday.

The Iraqi currency was also fixed at 450 against the U.S. dollar by the central bank, compared to 3,000 dinars for a dollar two weeks ago on the black market.

The dinar has shot up against the dollar since the announcement on Jan. 19 that Iraq would begin discussions with the U.N. on a partial lifting of the five-year economic embargo to sell oil for food and medicine under tight U.N. controls.

Fares for public buses between Iraqi towns have been cut by up to 50 per cent, Transport Minister Ahmad Murad told the Al Qadisiya newspaper, adding that extra buses would be put into circulation.

He said a bus trip between Baghdad and Mosul, 400 kilometres north of the capital, would now cost 250 dinars compared to 500.

Private buses and taxis usually charge higher prices. Many Iraqis curtailed their travelling within the country because it was so expensive.

The government agency in charge of milk distribution also announced Sunday that its prices would be cut by

more than half, from 2,500 dinars for 20 litres of milk to 1,000. The price of a kilogramme of cheese will also be reduced from 1,300 to 700 dinars.

The overall price of food has fallen sharply with the rise of the dinar.

Iraqi officials are set to begin talks Tuesday in New York on Resolution 986, which would allow for limited oil sales under strict international control.

Iraq has been under a U.N. economic embargo since it invaded Kuwait in August 1990. The U.N. Security Council has refused to lift the embargo, charging that Iraq has not completely dismantled its programme to build biological, chemical and nuclear weapons.

Meanwhile, Iraq announced Sunday that it had repaired two oil tankers damaged in two of its major conflicts and they were ready to refuel ships arriving in Iraqi ports. The announcement came ahead of talks between Iraq and the U.N. on implementing an oil-for-food deal due to open Tuesday in New York.

Under Resolution 986 Baghdad could sell a billion dollars of oil per quarter to buy food and medicine under strict U.N. control.

"Iraq has managed without

any help to repair two oil tankers responsible for supplying fuel to ships and which were damaged during the (1980-1988) war with Iran and the multinational aggression" of the 1991 Gulf war, an oil ministry official told the agency INA.

"The two tankers Al Baath, with a capacity of 10,000 tonnes and Al Khaldia, with a capacity of 7,000 tonnes, were supplying ships entering the ports of Umm Qasr and Al Zubeir as well as in the oil terminals in Mina Al Amiq and Mina Al Bakr" before the two conflicts.

Iraq said Thursday it had tested its oil terminal at Mina Al Bakr in anticipation of returning to the oil market after an absence of more than five years.

If Iraq agrees to accept the resolution, it will have to export most of its oil via an Iraqi-Turkish pipeline and the rest from Mina Al Bakr. Mina Al Bakr and Mina Al Amiq were seriously damaged by allied air bombardments during the 1991 Gulf war to free Kuwait from occupying Iraqi troops. But Baghdad has announced that the two terminals have been completely restored.

They have a current capacity of 1.2 million barrels per day (b/d), an Iraqi source said.

IMF urges UAE to impose taxes, cut subsidies

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The International Monetary Fund (IMF), in an unprecedented prescription for the United Arab Emirates (UAE), has urged the Gulf country to impose income tax and cut subsidies to revive its economy and tackle a large financial deficit.

The IMF, in a report published in the weekly magazine Emirates Today, said the UAE needed to embark on a "strong fiscal reform programme" to reduce a budget deficit which could climb to as high as 10 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP) annually until the year 2000.

It said a deficit in the current account, which covers trade and financial dealings with other countries, could also deteriorate to reach an annual average of around 3.4 per cent of the GDP in the same period.

"The UAE needs a strong, comprehensive financial reform programme in the medium term with clear objectives," said the report, which was prepared by an IMF mission during a visit to the emirates last year.

"The programme should include accurate information about revenue and expenditure in order to benefit from IMF recommendations," it added.

The recommendations covered "reducing government subsidies to the public and private sectors, cutting redundant labour in the civil service, rationalising non-

productive spending and introducing large-scale consumption taxes as well as taxes on income of individuals and companies."

It was the first time that the IMF recommended such tough measures to the UAE, which has said it would join other Gulf oil producers in taking steps to revive its economy hit hard by weak crude prices.

The UAE, a key OPEC producer, has ruled out introduction of income taxes to tackle its deficit, apparently fearing such a move could trigger mass resignations as was the case in Saudi Arabia eight years ago.

Despite lower oil earnings, the UAE government continued to provide heavy subsidies to local farmers and such services as electricity and water. Last year, it heeded IMF advice and hiked power and water rates but they remained largely subsidised, according to officials.

The drop in income has turned a large financial surplus into a deficit, which was forecast at 13.8 billion dirhams (\$3.76 billion) in 1995 compared with a record 15.9 billion dirhams (\$4.33 billion) in 1990.

The government has not revealed how the shortfall had been cut as it has been reluctant to issue bonds. But experts said they believed additional funds had come from withdrawal from overseas reserves and borrowing, citing an external debt of

around \$12 billion.

"If the present policies are not revised, then the huge deficit will persist over the next five years," the IMF said.

"This will force the government to resort to more withdrawals from its overseas reserves, and consequently this could weaken confidence in the management of the economy in the country," it added.

An IMF breakdown showed government spending had steadily grown over the past five years, rising to around 55.9 billion dirhams (\$15.23 billion) in 1995 from nearly 49.7 billion dirhams (\$13.54 billion) in 1990.

The increase occurred despite a decline in oil revenues to 31.6 billion dirhams (\$8.61 billion) from 34 billion dirhams (\$9.26 billion) over the same period.

The IMF said the UAE also needed to follow the example of Kuwait and other Gulf states to broaden the private sector through the sale of public facilities.

"The UAE should work to strengthen the non-oil and private sectors through the implementation of a comprehensive privatisation programme," it said.

It also advised the UAE, which produces around 2.16 million barrels per day of oil under the OPEC quota accord, to detach its currency, the dirham, from the U.S. dollar and link it to a basket of currencies to guard against dollar fluctuations and contain inflation.

ported by the emirate of Abu Dhabi, the largest of the federation.

It was the fourth year running that the UAE, a key OPEC oil producer, eliminated or slashed its federal budget deficit through exercising control on expenditure and additional contributions from oil producing emirates.

"According to my information, spending through 1995 was lower than projected and revenues were higher. I believe this has removed the budget deficit, if not turned it into a surplus," a UAE bank manager said.

The UAE, which controls around 10 per cent of the world's proven crude reserves, had forecast a deficit of nearly \$290 million as spending was estimated at \$4.89 billion and revenues of around \$4.6 billion.

Total revenues could be sharply higher if they were calculated within the consolidated accounts, which cover the federal budget and that of each of the seven Gulf sheikhdoms making up the country.

The federal budget is in theory financed through half the income of each emirate but in effect, almost all the funds come from the two main oil producing members — Abu Dhabi and Dubai.

In some years, the two emirates increase their contributions to tackle a large deficit while other emirates are asked to keep spending to the minimum.

That was the case in 1994, when projected expenditure of around \$4.79 billion was cut to 4.27 billion dollars and earnings were boosted to \$4.44 billion from an estimated \$4.41 billion.

This turned a forecast budget deficit of \$380 million into a surplus to \$187.7 million, according to the UAE

central bank.

In 1993, a projected deficit of \$470 million was reduced to only \$6.5 million by the end of the year due to spending cuts. In 1992, a surplus of \$400 million became a surplus of \$569 million.

"The federal budget recorded a large surplus in the first half of 1995 according to information from the finance ministry. The trend likely continued through the year, there were no signs of major increases in government expenditure," said a bank close to the finance ministry.

The UAE relies heavily on oil exports despite attempts to diversify sources of income. Like other Gulf states, it started to introduce austerity measures after crude prices began to climb down in mid 1980s.

An increase in oil prices of around \$1.3 in 1995 boosted its income to \$12.7 billion from around \$11.79 billion in 1994 while it maintained OPEC-assigned output at 2.16 million barrels per day.

But it was not known what effects the higher earnings had on its consolidated accounts, which have suffered from a large actual deficit over the past few years, mainly because of high defence spending. Abu Dhabi is the main emirate to spend on defence and these expenditures are not included in the federal budget.

Official figures showed such a deficit stood at 153 billion dirhams (\$4.33 billion) in 1994 compared with 130 billion dirhams (\$3.55 billion) in 1993. The wider gap was caused by a slight rise in expenditure and a decline in revenue due to weak crude prices.

No official figures have been released on government defence spending but military sources have put it at an average \$1 billion a year.

Saudi study sees plug for foreign cash drain

DUBAI (R) — A Saudi business group recommended foreigners in the kingdom be allowed to buy property and invest in the domestic stock market to put their wages to work in the local economy, a newspaper reported Sunday.

Foreign workers repatriated up to \$13 billion in wages in 1995, part of which could

have been used locally, the Saudi daily Arab News said. It quoted a senior official at the Riyadh Chamber of Commerce as saying a study recommended that foreigners be allowed to trade in Saudi Arabia's stock market under the supervision of the Saudi Arabian Monetary Agency, the kingdom's central bank.

"The aim of the study is to

identify investment opportunities for expatriates in the kingdom so that part of the money they remit could be invested in this country," Arab News quoted the official as saying.

"They should also be allowed to invest in real estate," the newspaper quoted the study as saying. Officials could not be

reached on Sunday. It was not clear whether the report would be considered by the government.

Saudi laws would have to be changed to expand the investment base for foreigners. Non-Gulf Arab foreigners are not permitted to trade in the stock market or buy property.

But they can invest in mutual funds through Saudi banks.

More than six million foreigners are among the 17.9 million population in Saudi Arabia, which is working to rejuvenate its economy hit by years of deficits and free spending. Weak oil prices and punishing 1991 Gulf war costs strapped resources.

Its current five-year plan to 2000 aims to reduce dependence on oil and encourage a greater role for the private sector.

Economist: Illegal activity equals to 11% of Egypt's GDP

CAIRO (AFP) — Nearly \$3 billion, mostly made from the drug trade, is laundered in Egypt a year, while total illegal activities were equal to 11 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP), an economist has said.

"The value of money

laundry operations in Egypt totalled 9.8 billion Egyptian pounds (\$2.9 billion) in 1994," Hamdi Abdul Aziz, dean of the Sadat

Academy for Administrative Studies in the northern town of Tanta, said in a report. Dr. Abdul Aziz, quoted in the Arab daily Al Hayat, said the total of illegal money earned in Egypt the same year was 16.3 billion pounds (\$5.7 billion).

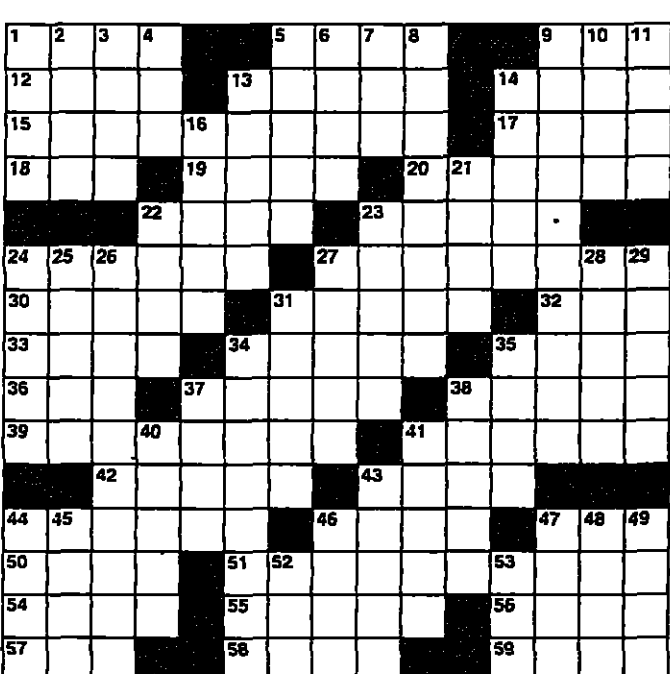
At that rate, illegal activities would generate the equivalent of 11 per cent of Egypt's GDP, which totalled 175 billion pounds (\$51 bil-

lion) in 1994. Most of the laundered cash came from the drug trade, valued at three billion pounds (\$882 million) in 1994, whitewashed through private exchanges, local and international companies and investment companies.

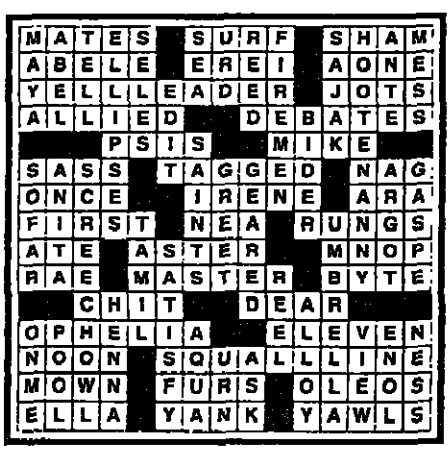
Meanwhile, the government weekly Rose Al Youssef reported that a total value of \$189 million were embezzled in Egypt in 1995.

THE Daily Crossword by C.F. Murray

- ACROSS
- Advantage
 - Freeway exit
 - Keenly aware of
 - Name in fashion
 - Alma's follower
 - Excavation
 - Desiccated
 - City on the Juma
 - Vote for
 - Decorous
 - Portuguese mister
 - Pack
 - Hagar's wife
 - Companion
 - Agitates greatly
 - Stand
 - Military salute
 - Morning moisture
 - Beep
 - Ball figure
 - Writer Ferber
 - Biblical suffix
 - British philosopher
 - Saint John's bread
 - Makes like new
 - Revelers of myth
 - Actor Jeremy
 - Bogs
 - Interest on a leaf
 - Candy stripper
 - Retreat
 - Pianist Peter
 - Clavicle
 - Boat cover
 - Carrying heavy luggage
 - Cupid
 - Carte start
 - Q.E.D. word
 - Certain region



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- DOWN
- Small whirlpool
 - Calamitous
 - "Naked Maia" painter
 - Time period
 - Fanatic
 - Smidgen

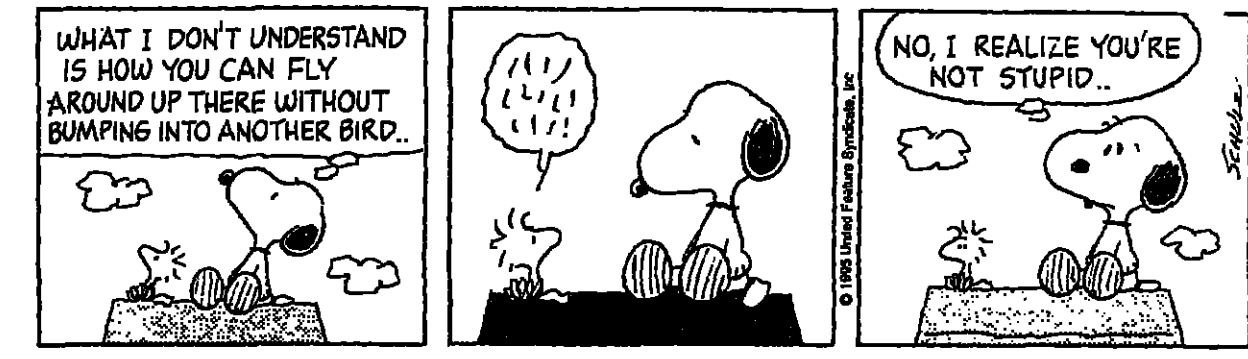
- Boys, later
- Can
- Stranded
- Ornamental box
- Corday's victim
- Skin affliction
- Fern "seed"
- Pollster Roper
- Be vanquished
- Tree with red berries
- Escapade
- Declaim
- Ida Lupino film
- Stories
- Domingo, e.g.
- Cleans
- Monica of tennis
- Nuisance on a boat
- Truck stop sign
- Car follower
- Worker with rattan
- Company
- Auto style
- mignon
- Theater gp.
- Substantial
- Actor Robert or Alan
- Copperfield's wife
- Slaughter of baseball
- Branch home
- Flowing need
- Hymenopteran

THE BETTER HALF By Glasbergen



"The world would never run out of fuel if they'd invent a car that runs on stupidity."

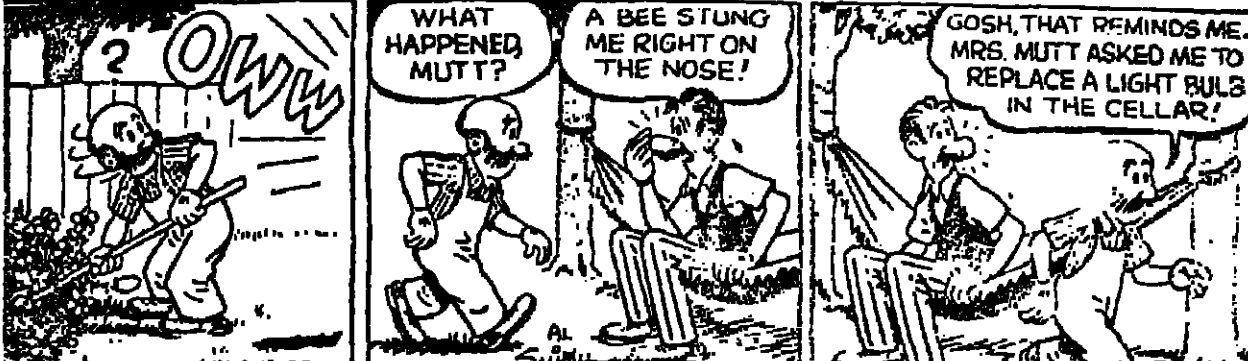
Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR MONDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 1996

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Being patient in doing your career today is wise, whether it be in the outside world or at home, since there could be many delays.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) You feel nervous and want to change your plan about recreations today. (4) don't do so. Don't lose your temper or there could be dire consequences.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Make plans for the day today and carry them through instead of running off at random here and there which will do no good for your success.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) If an outside partner acts strangely today, do not get your feelings hurt since this person is under tension and does not understand his or her attitude.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Control that temptation to spend lavishly today and save the money for more practical purposes. Handle business wisely.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Try to come to the right decision about changes you want to make either at this time, at your home or at place of business.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) You want to get out of limitations placed upon you today, but be patient since this is not the right time to do it or difficulties could develop.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Pals may disappoint you today, but realize that they may have difficulties also. Don't be overly anxious to gain your wishes.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You have to be wise, but tactful in business or public dealings today if you want to have good results and be very successful.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) You feel you are in a rut, so plan today just how to get out of it very soon. Do not rely on a new contact or you will be disappointed.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) You think your hunches are good today and want to follow them, but the could lead you in wrong directions which could be disastrous.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) This is not the day today to get your points across to a stubborn associate, so postpone until a better time any suggestions you may have.

Birthstone of February: Amethyst — Onyx

Unstoppable Seizinger completes triple

VAL D'ISERE, France (R) — Unstoppable Katja Seizinger of Germany was in a class of her own again as she recorded her third victory in as many days in a Super-Giant Slalom on Sunday to wrap up the world cup title.

Seizinger, who had jumped into the World Cup lead with wins in another Super-G on Friday and a downhill on Saturday, ended a busy weekend in style with a winning time of one minute 6.64 seconds.

The win means she will retain her world cup super-giant slalom title, with only one event remaining this season, she is more than 100 points clear of her nearest rival, Alexandra Meissnitzer of Austria, who came sixth in Sunday's race.

Seizinger can also reasonably dream of overall World Cup victory after finishing in the top three in each of the last four races.

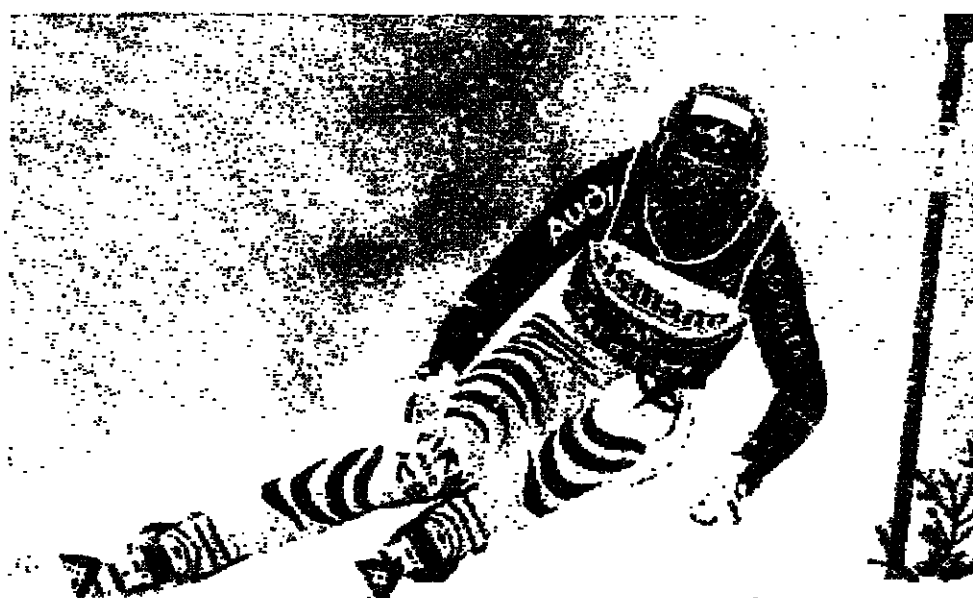
The Olympic downhill champion and Super-Giant world champion looked impressive on the 1.796-km Oreiller-Killy piste as her rivals struggled on a course made tricky by a thin layer of fresh snow.

Italy's Isolde Kostner made a poor start and was 0.67 seconds off the pace at the first intermediate timecheck. But a strong finish on the fat lower section allowed her to take second place, 0.38 seconds back.

Austrian rising star Renate Goetsch, who was second in Friday's Super-G, had another consistent run to come third, 0.41 seconds behind the winner.

The race, which went ahead despite poor visibility and light snowfalls, was the last scheduled women's event before the world championships in Sierra Nevada, Spain, next week when Seizinger will start as favourite in the speed events.

Seizinger, who has won three of the six Super-Giant slaloms held so far, now has 465 points in the World Cup



Germany's Katja Seizinger in action under heavy snow to win the women's World Cup Super G race 4 in Val D'Isere, French Alps, with a time of 1:06.64 (Reuters photo)

standings in the discipline. She will take the title in that event for the fourth consecutive time as Meissnitzer, second with 354 points, will not be able to catch up, a race win carries 100 points.

In the overall World Cup, the German leaves Val D'Isere with 1082 points against Austrian Anita Wachter's 891.

Wachter, who had come here in the lead, fared poorly in all three races. She was out of the top 30 Sunday and failed to score a single point.

Seizinger could have done even more damage if Saturday's second downhill had not been cancelled because of bad weather with her leading after 11 starters.

"It's too early to think about the overall title because there are quite a few races left," said Seizinger, who was pushed into second place by Vreni Schneider of Switzerland in the very last race season.

A bad weekend last month in Cortina and then a frustrating one in Sestriere, where a downhill was cancelled,

led, had made the 23-year-old German hungry for victory.

"I wanted to do well here, especially with the world championships starting soon," she said. "I feel great at the moment and I hope I can do well there."

Kostner, who is enjoying the best results of her career this season, also had a fine weekend with a third place in Saturday's downhill.

"It's a pity the second downhill was cancelled but it was the right decision because we couldn't see the first gate," she said. "Today, the conditions were alright."

Kostner paid tribute to Seizinger, saying: "She's really strong. The way she's skiing at the moment, the only way to beat her is not to make a single mistake. Nobody could do that. She will be hard to beat in Sierra Nevada."

Fog forces organisers to call off men's downhill

Garmisch-Partenkirchen.

Germany, dense fog on the Kandahar course Sunday forced organisers to call off a World Cup men's downhill for the second day in a row.

There was no immediate decision whether the race will be run Monday.

Organisers first planned to have a two-run, shortened downhill race, but called the event off shortly before it was scheduled to start when the fog failed to lift.

Off the three races planned for the weekend, only Friday's downhill went ahead as planned and was won by Luc Alphand of France, a downhill was planned for Saturday and a Super-Giant slalom for Sunday. Saturday's downhill was then postponed for 24 hours, with the Super-G moved to Monday.

Sunday's fog wiped out those plans.

The races here are the last speed races before the World Championships that start Feb. 12 in Sierra Nevada, Spain, a Giant slalom is scheduled for Feb. 10 in Hinterstoder, Austria.

Becker out of Davis Cup

BONN (AFP) — Boris Becker will miss Germany's Davis Cup clash with Switzerland in Geneva next week because of injury.

Becker, ranked fourth in the world after winning the Australian Open, said he was suffering from inflamed ligaments in his left leg.

"My whole leg hurts and is all but useless," he said.

Germany's chances had already been hit by Michael Stich's three-and-a-half month lay-off with an ankle injury.

Stich is likely to play the singles with Marc Goellner while Bernd Karbacher, Hendrik Dreckmann and David Prinosil will fight it out for the other team places.

Ivanisevic battles past Forget

ZAGREB, Croatia (AP) — Top-seeded local favourite Goran Ivanisevic advanced to the final of the \$400,000 Croatian indoors, defeating Guy Forget of France, 7-6 (7-4), 4-6, 6-4.

The 10th-ranked Croatian will face Cedric Pioline in the championship match, after the Frenchman crushed Marc Goellner of Germany, 6-4, 7-6 (8-6).

It will be Ivanisevic's second final this year, having lost to American Todd Martin at the Peters International in Sydney, immediately before the Australian Open.

Besides competing, Ivanisevic is a co-promoter of this week's tournament, of which he owns one-third.

"It wasn't easy for me to play at the tournament and be one of its owners at the same time," he said.



Black and white South African supporters share soccer fever at the FNB stadium during the final of the African Cup of Nations. Bafana Bafana, the South African soccer team, beat Tunisia 2-0 to become champions of Africa (Reuters photo)

S. Africa celebrate soccer win, set sights on '98 World Cup

JOHANNESBURG (Agencies) — South Africa's soccer team awoke on Sunday to popular acclaim and a new standing in international soccer and said they were now setting their sights on the World Cup finals in France.

Nowadays, with Nelson Mandela President and South Africa nicknamed the Rainbow Nation, nothing brings black and whites closer together than an astonishing string of sporting triumphs.

The South African soccer team fed the nation's pride Saturday by winning the African Cup of Nations in the first time it ever played in the tournament, defeating Tunisia 2-0.

In the days of white-minority rule, when color divided everything, soccer was black, rugby white, some of the biggest rallies against apartheid were held at soccer grounds.

The victory set off a flurry of nationwide celebrations that continued in many places well past dawn and prompted a string of accolades from the national press.

All the Sunday papers, including the Afrikaans language Rapport, led with South Africa's victory on both their front page and sports sections.

"A nation of champions," said the Sunday Times in a reference to South Africa's win on Saturday as well as their triumph in last year's Rugby World Cup and the recent cricket test series against England.

Coach Clive Barker, amazingly still employed only on a part-time basis, said he would now be setting his sights on a place at the 1998 World Cup Finals in France.

"I'm not sure how long I'll still be around but I want to take the team to France," he said.

South Africa begin their World Cup qualifying campaign with a home-and-away

knockout tie against Malawi in June and their chances of a place in the finals have been greatly enhanced by the increase of Africa's representation at the next World Cup finals to five nations.

The team will have the added bonus of seeing key players move in the coming months to more professional clubs in Europe.

Several players, including Mark Fish, John Moshoeu, Shaun Bartlett and Eric Tinkler, have been offered contracts or trials with European teams on the basis of their performance at the Nations' Cup.

A crowd of 80,000 including President Nelson Mandela, Zulu King Goodwill Zwelithini, Deputy President F.W. de Klerk and Brazilian soccer legend Pele packed the stadium three hours before the kickoff in blazing Transvaal heat.

Mandela wore the number 9 shirt of captain Neil Tovey and in the crowd several spectators had variations of the message "Make Mandela Magic" painted on their bare chests.

Though soccer has traditionally been a black sport in South Africa, hundreds of whites were amongst the crowd. Some of the blacks had painted their heads white and some of the whites had painted themselves brown.

"The crowd was unbelievable — they're worth the two goals we scored," coach Clive Barker said afterwards. "I'll be afraid to play away from South Africa after this. We've been spoiled."

The crowd waited for Mandela to present the cup before heading out to what promised to be an all-night celebration.

Before the start of the African Championship series on January 13, soccer's controlling body, FIFA, ranked South Africa 10th on the continent and 40th in the world.

Pankratov breaks record

PARIS (R) — Denis Pankratov either forgot his manners or his coach's advice when he smashed the world short course 200 metres butterfly record at the Paris World Cup meeting on Saturday.

The Russian led from start to finish to clock one minute 52.34 seconds, slashing 0.71 seconds off the previous mark of Frenchman Franck Esposito.

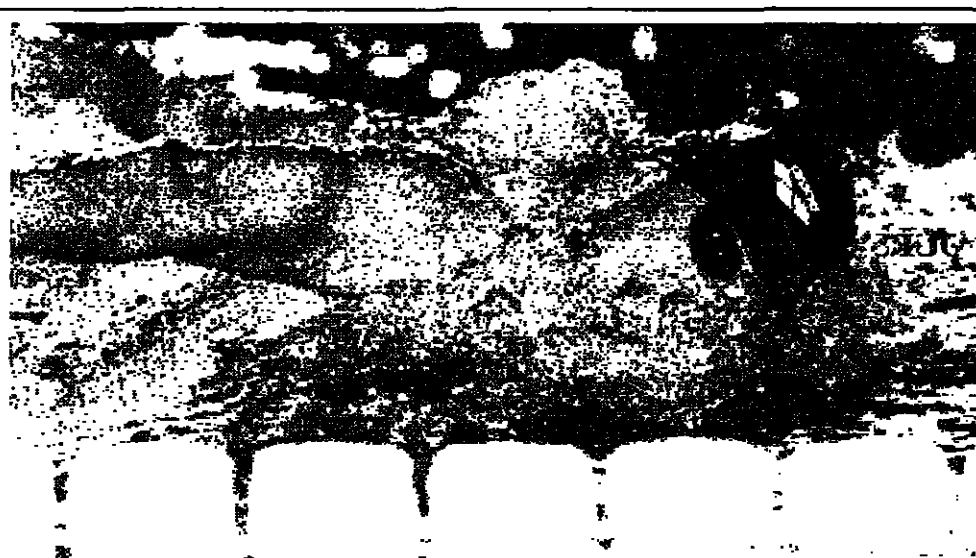
Pankratov had said before the meeting his coach had told him to concentrate on breaking the world 100 metres butterfly record as it would not be polite to break Esposito's record against the French swimmer in front of his home fans.

The unfortunate Esposito could do nothing against the mighty Russian with the submarine style in which he swims under water for the first length.

Esposito, who had set the previous record in Paris nearly two years ago, finished second but was more than five seconds behind.

"I don't know what happened," Pankratov said afterwards. "I just tried to swim my normal race and I broke the world record."

Esposito recognised his rival's clear superiority. "When he takes to the water like that, he can break the world record any time he wants. Denis is an extra-terrestrial," he said.



Russian swimmer Denis Pankratov in action to set a new world 200m short course butterfly record during the World Cup meeting in Paris (Reuters photo)

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TAMARA HIRSHEN ©1994 by Omar Sharif, Inc.

WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q. 1 - Both vulnerable, as South you hold:

♠ A Q 10 9 ♣ K A J 7 ♠ A J 8 5 Your right-hand opponent opens the bidding with one heart. What action do you take?

Q. 2 - Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:

♠ K Q 6 4 3 ♠ 5 4 3 2 ♠ A Q 8 2 The bidding has proceeded NORTH EAST SOUTH WEST 1♣ Pass 1♠ Pass 2♣ Pass What action do you take?

Q. 3 - East-West vulnerable, as South you hold:

♠ A K 10 8 2 ♠ Q J 4 3 2 ♠ A K Q 3 The bidding has proceeded EAST SOUTH WEST NORTH 1♣ Pass 1♠ Pass 2♣ Pass What action do you take?

Q. 4 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:

♠ A K 10 8 2 ♠ Q J 4 3 2 ♠ A K Q 3 The bidding has proceeded EAST SOUTH WEST NORTH 1♣ Pass 1♠ Pass 2♣ Pass What action do you take?

♠ A Q J 9 8 5 4 3 ♠ K 10 ♠ Void ♠ A Q 7 The bidding has proceeded: WEST NORTH EAST SOUTH 1♣ Pass 1♠ Pass 2♣ Pass What do you bid now?

Q. 5 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:

♠ A K 9 ♠ A Q 7 2 2 ♠ K 4 ♠ 10 9 3 Your right-hand opponent opens the bidding with one spade. What action do you take?

Q. 6 - Both vulnerable, as South you hold:

♠ A Q 10 6 2 ♠ K J 6 2 ♠ A Q 6 5 4 The bidding has proceeded: NORTH EAST SOUTH WEST 1♣ Pass 1♠ Pass 2♣ Pass 2♦ Pass What action do you take?

Atletico boost title claims

MADRID (Agencies) — Atletico Madrid moved yet closer to the Spanish first division title here Saturday with a hard-fought 2-1 win over Sporting Gijon achieved courtesy of goals by Milinko Pantic and Jose Luis Caminero.

Atletico stretched their lead over joint second-placed Barcelona and Espanyol to 12 points although the Catalan sides both have a match in hand.

Valencia meanwhile suffered a blow to their UEFA Cup aspirations as they crashed 4-1 at Zaragoza.

Cantona returns with 2 goals
In London Eric Cantona



made a spectacular but peaceful return to Selhurst Park Saturday with two goals in a 4-2 victory for Manchester United at Wimbledon.

A year after the Frenchman attacked a Crystal Palace fan kung-fu style by leaping into the crowd and kicking him, Cantona made his mark with an impressive performance on the field this time, his second goal coming from the penalty spot near the end.

Andy Cole and an own goal by Wimbledon defender Chris Perry gave United early control before Cantona's later strikes. Marcus Gayle and Jason Euell replied for Wimbledon but victory for Alex Ferguson's team was never in doubt.

The Reds regained second place from Liverpool, which was held 0-0 at home by Tottenham.

Leader Newcastle downed Sheffield Wednesday 2-0 with goals from Les Ferdinand, his 100th in the league, and Lee Clark. Kevin Keegan's Magpies remain nine points clear of Ferguson's team with Liverpool third two points further behind.

Aston Villa climbed to fourth after a 3-0 victory over Leeds at Villa Park. Tottenham striker Dwight Yorke scored his 50th goal.

Seven top clubs crash in French Cup

PARIS (R) — Seven First Division clubs, including Nantes, Bordeaux, St. Etienne and Metz, crashed out of the French Cup on Saturday on a night made for giant-killing.

Three clubs from the equivalent of the Third Division triumphed over top flight clubs with Nimes pulling off one of the exploits of the day by beating St. Etienne 3-1.

Toulon, twice behind against Bordeaux, came through in extra time to win 3-2 and Lille Thouras reached the last 16 of the Cup for the first time in their history when they beat Martigues 1-0, also in extra time.

Three other first division clubs lost at home to second division sides, the biggest surprise coming in Metz where the team challenging Paris St. Germain for the title lost to Second Division leaders Caen 1-0.

Cannes went down by the same score to Sochaux and Nice also lost at home to Laval by the only goal of the game, missing a penalty before going under in extra time.

French champions Nantes lost 3-4 on penalties at home to Monaco after a thrilling match, the only tie between sides from the upper flight, after a 2-2 extra time scoreline.

Record Cup winners Marseille went through easily enough with a 2-0 win away to Pantivy.

Paris St. Germain were equally untroubled, beating Second Division Angers 2-0 with goals from Bruno N'Gotty and Rai, who converted a late penalty.

Only five first division teams have reached the last 16 so far though two more could get through. Montpellier's match against Istres and Le Havre's against Blenod were postponed by bad weather conditions.



Juan Andres Larre of Angers (left) and Bruno Ngotty of Paris Saint Germain head the ball during their French soccer cup match between the two teams at Paris Parc des Princes Stadium (Reuters photo)

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WESLEY SNIPES & YANCY BUTLER in DROP ZONE		Nabieleh Oubead/safiyah Al Omaree/Farouq Feeshawi in Atabeht Al Settat (ladie's Step) Arabic		CONCORD "1" * Police Academy Shows: 12:30, 2:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30 CONCORD "2" * Jim Carrie Shows: 2:30, 6:15		Shows: 12:30, 3, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30	Shows: 8:30 p.m. For reservation call 625155
Shows: 12:30, 3:00, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30 p.m.		Shows: 12:30, 2:15, 6:45, 8:30, 10:30					



Majoli beats Sanchez to win Toray title

TOKYO (AFP) — Iva Majoli completed her excellent giant-killing run by beating Arantxa Sanchez Vicario to win the \$926,250 Toray Pan Pacific Open tennis tournament on Sunday.

The injury-plagued 18-year-old from Croatia, who shocked world co-number one Monica Seles on her way to the final, proved it was no fluke scoring a 6-4, 6-1 victory over the Spanish former world number one.

"Definitely, it was the best week in my life. It was really a tough week for me, but great week, beating Monica and Martina (Hingis). I can't believe that I really won. Today, I think I played the best tennis I did in the whole week," said Majoli.

"I had tough matches against Monica, Martina and Arantxa. But it's good to win. You have a little bit more confidence, you know they are not unbeatable, and you feel that you can beat them next time again."

Majoli, suffering pains to her shoulder and both legs,



Winner Iva Majoli (left) of Croatia smiles with Spain's Arantxa Sanchez Vicario atop the podium as they hold up

took a break lead twice to 2-1 and 4-3 in the first set, but each time Sanchez Vicario broke back to even the score — one on Majoli's double fault at 30-40 in the fourth game.

But Majoli gathered momentum and used her powerful forehand in full swing to move Sanchez Vicario round, completely pulverising the Spaniard's pre-match plan to charge to the net.

Although both had several break points, Majoli always appeared to be

the winner and took the following six games in a row to lead 4-0 in the second set.

Majoli permitted Sanchez Vicario to hold only one more game and then fired another powerful forehand to force her opponent a backhand error on her second match point.

"I played pretty good in the first set. I was taking more risk and going for the shots. But in the second set, everything started going in. I think she couldn't do anything...

their trophies at the Pan Pacific women's indoor tennis tournament in Tokyo Sunday (Reuters photo)

very easy," said Majoli.

She said her injuries were still the same as in her previous matches and added that she would take a couple of days off before going to Paris and Essen.

Majoli will move up to her career highest of fourth in the rankings next week with her third title, following her first two back-to-back victories in Zurich and Filderstadt in October.

She earned the \$200,000 first prize and reduced her win-loss record against

Sanchez Vicario to 1-3.

Sanchez Vicario said: "I had a great tournament too, but she had a lot of confidence winning her matches before. She was just going for the shots and she didn't miss many of them... she hit all the shots better than I did today."

Sanchez Vicario, who failed to win her first title since her triumph at the German Open in May, had to be satisfied with the runner-up prize of \$100,000.

T-Wolves beat Dallas; Houston lose in OT

DALLAS (R) — Tom Gugliotta had 22 points and 20 rebounds and Isiah Rider scored 26 points as the Minnesota Timberwolves scored a rare road win, a 105-96 victory over the Dallas Mavericks on a rough night for the home teams around the National Basketball Association Saturday.

Christian Laettner chipped in 20 points and Darrius Martin added 10 and eight assists for Minnesota, which snapped a five-game losing streak with only their fourth win in 14 games away from home this season.

Jason Kidd had 26 points, eight assists, seven rebounds and four steals and Popeye Jones had 21 points and 13 rebounds for Dallas, which was looking to win three in a row for the first time since opening the season with four wins.

Dallas closed to 96-91 on a three-pointer by Kidd with 30 seconds left, but Minnesota thwarted the rally as Martin made one free throw. Rider made two and Gugliotta dunked for a 10-point cushion with 32 seconds to go.

In Miami, Dana Barros hit a 20-foot jumper with eight minutes of a second half to lift the Boston Celtics past the Heat 100-99, wasting a career-best 45-point performance by Miami centre Alonzo Mourning.

Trailing 99-98 with 11 seconds left, the Celtics inbounded the ball and Barros beat a lunging Bimbo Coles for the game-winning basket.

The shot ruined a furious comeback by the Heat, who trailed from a 98-91 deficit to take a 99-98 lead on a three-pointer by Keith Askins with 54 seconds to go.

Mourning, who was 19-of-24 from the field and 7-of-10 from the line, also grabbed 11 rebounds and blocked seven shots.

In Detroit, Mitch Richmond scored 34 points to lead the Sacramento Kings past the cold-shooting Pistons, 94-85.

Walt Williams added 15 points and seven assists for the Kings, who won for just the third time in their last nine road games with the help of a key 12-3 fourth-quarter spurt.

Grant Hill scored 22 points and Allan Houston added 16 for Detroit, which made only 22-of-46 shots in the fourth quarter, including 0-of-10 from two-point range.

The Pistons shot a dismal 36 per cent (27-of-75) from the floor and were held without a basket for nearly 10 minutes in the final period.

In Philadelphia, Rod Strickland scored 18 points and James Robinson scored eight of his 17 in a 15-0 second-quarter run as the Portland Trail Blazers beat the woeful 76ers 96-85.

Strickland added 11 assists and rookie Gary Trent chipped in 17 points for Portland.

Vernon Maxwell scored 20 points, Clarence Weatherspoon added 18 and Sean Higgins had 17 for Philadelphia, which lost for the 11th time in 12 games and fell to a league-worst 5-18 at home.

"We have to play near perfect to win, to even be in games," lamented Sixers coach John Lucas.

In Houston, Gary Payton scored a season-high 32 points, including a key three-pointer in overtime, as the Seattle SuperSonics edged the struggling Rockets 104-103.

Hersey Hawkins scored 13 of his 22 points in the final 10 minutes for Seattle, winner of its last six meetings with the two-time defending NBA champions.

Hakeem Olajuwon finished with 36 points and 12 rebounds for Houston, which has lost six of its last nine contests.

An Olajuwon jumper had pulled Houston to 101-100. Sam Perkins then missed a three-point shot for Seattle, but Nate McMillan grabbed the rebound and found Payton who scored with seven seconds to play to ice the win.

In Milwaukee, Terrell Brandon scored 22 points and Dan Majerle and Bob Sura scored nine apiece in a second-quarter run as the Cleveland Cavaliers continued their mastery of the Bucks with a 111-88 rout.

Milwaukee's Shawn Respert tied the game 29-29 on a three-point shot with just under nine minutes to play in the first half, but the Cavs seized control with a 24-4 burst that put them ahead 53-33 with 3:10 left.

In Los Angeles, Damon Stoudamire scored 10 of his 25 points in overtime and Willie Anderson added four free throws in the final 20 seconds to lead the Toronto Raptors to a 119-113 victory over the Clippers as the road teams made it a clean sweep.

Oliver Miller added 19 points and 11 rebounds for Raptors, who snapped a four-game losing streak and a 21-game road slide.

Terry Dehere scored 21 points off the bench, Rodney Rogers added a season-high 20 and Loy Vaught netted 18 for Los Angeles, losers of five in a row and nine of 10 games.

RESULTS

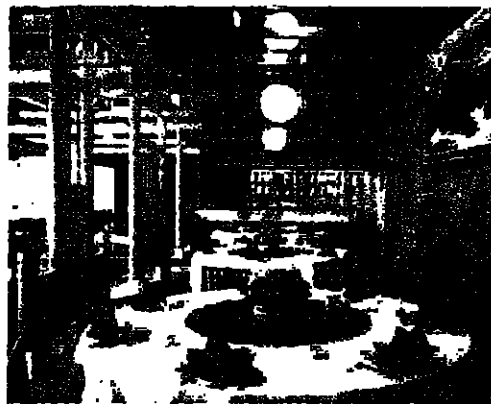
Sacramento	94	Detroit	85
Boston	100	Miami	99
Portland	96	Philadelphia	85
Minnesota	105	Dallas	96
Cleveland	111	Milwaukee	88
Seattle	104	Houston	103 (OT)
Toronto	119	LA Clippers	115 (OT)

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1. Functions as the Contracts Administrator and Personal Officer and provides financial oversight for the DAI/Amman office. Oversees all contractual and personnel matters and ensures they meet USAID requirements.
2. Monitors project expenditures against the contract budget and assists the Chief of Party in allocating funds and updating the project budget bi-annually.
3. Manages the Lotus Notes database and trains staff in its use. Works with all the working groups to determine their required involvement in the Lotus Notes database and trains those required to utilize Notes.
4. Responsible for information dissemination of the key activities and accomplishments for all project components. Produces a monthly Project newsletter highlighting the accomplishments of the various components and coordinates production of quarterly and annual progress reports.

Minimum Qualifications:

Must be an American citizen with at least six years professional experience including Project management experience required; educational background in business, social science or other appropriate discipline; knowledge of AIDAR and FAR contract regulations required; some accounting and financial management experience; experience producing and editing reports; knowledge of spreadsheet software (Microsoft Excel, Lotus 123), word processing software (Microsoft Word, word Perfect) and Lotus Notes essential; knowledge of electronic mail and project computerized management systems preferred; interest in environmental issues; strong interpersonal skills; must be self-motivated and able to work independently and under tight deadlines; excellent written and spoken communication skills in English, knowledge of Arabic preferred.

Closing Date:

Letter of interest and resume should be sent to the following address by 15 February 1996:

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Amman, Jordan

No shift in hands-off interest rates - CBJ

Bankers expect market forces to prompt increase in yield on deposits and loans

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) Governor Ziad Fariz Saturday denied a report that the CBJ had asked commercial banks to increase interest rates of loans. He affirmed that there was no change whatsoever in the bank's policy of allowing supply and demand to determine interest rates.

At the same time, senior executives at commercial banks said that interest rates were bound to increase as a result of higher yields on short-term certificates of deposit (CDs) issued by the CBJ to retain the edge of the Jordanian dinar against the American dollar in bank deposits.

Most banking executives contacted by the Jordan Times said they believed that interest rates could go up by between one and one-and-a-half per cent soon.

"Nothing has changed" in the CBJ's policy as far as interest rates are concerned "except the increase in interest offered on CDs," Dr. Fariz told the Jordan Times in response to a question on a local report that CBJ had sent a memo to commercial banks to increase interest levied on loans.

"It is business as usual and I have no intention of changing the present policy of floating interest rates," leaving it to market forces to determine the rate, added Dr. Fariz, a former minister of planning who took over as CBJ governor last month.

Banking executives also affirmed that they had received no communications from the Central Bank on raising interest rates and were surprised by the report.

"We have no reason to expect any change in the liberal approach of the CBJ," said Nimr Shakaa, general manager of the Philadelphia Bank for Investments.

It is highly unlikely that the CBJ would "ask" commercial banks to increase interest



Ziad Fariz

rates since such a move would contradict the very essence of allowing market forces to be the determining factor, he said.

Bankers noted that any effort by the CBJ to set interest rates in the market would be a reversal of a policy adopted nearly eight years ago when the monetary authorities lifted all controls over commercial interest rates.

At the same time, they said, there was a gradual move in the market to raise interest rates as an indirect result of high yield CDs being issued by the Central Bank.

"Money is going to be expensive in the market because of the higher yields on CDs," said Mr. Shakaa. He noted that when the yields on CDs go up, then commercial banks were prompted to keep up by increasing interest offered to depositors. This in turn leads to higher interest on loans to allow the banks to keep their margin between interest offered and interest levied.

The CBJ uses CDs in dinars primarily as a means to maintain the attraction of deposits in the Jordanian currency against holdings in the dollars. CDs also help check extra liquidity in the market that could lead to inflation beyond the level envisaged as part of the economic restructuring programme.

The average interest rate offered by commercial banks on deposits on "inners" ranges from eight per cent to 8.5 per cent while they charge between 11.5 per cent to 14 per cent on one-year loans and up to 15 per cent if the loan maturity exceeds one year.

Hani Kakish, deputy general manager of the Amman Investment Bank, said the average "prime rate" that the bank offered to select clients was around 12 per cent.

"It could go up by two per cent depending on the nature of the client, collateral and performance of the business etc.," said Mr. Kakish.

Rafik Hariri, deputy general manager for branches at ANZ Grindlays Bank, declined to be specific on "Grindlays" rate except that "it is between 11 and 13 per cent."

Islamic Jihad also issued a written statement Sunday pledging to take revenge for the killings.

"Our arm is long and we are capable of hitting back against this murder of our two martyrs," the statement said.

"The revenge of our mujahideen and people cannot be stopped by the terror and oppression of the Palestinian Authority and its Zionist allies."

Witnesses told AFP that Palestinian police entered the house where the two were hiding and when they refused to come out of a locked room, opened fire through the door, killing both.

Their names were provided to Israeli police by another Palestinian, Abdul Khalil Al Bissi, who was arrested last year on charges of building the bomb used in the attack.

A third Jihad militant accused by Israel of involvement in the attack, Mahmoud Hawaja, was killed last June in the Gaza Strip by unknown assailants. Islamic Jihad blamed Israeli agents for his slaying.

"The path of blood will not stop and we will not replace this choice and honour with America and Israel," Islamic Jihad leader Nafez Azzam said at the graveyard on Sunday.

Witnesses said the crowd started to attack the Jabalya police station but Islamic Jihad leaders stopped them.

Hamas leader Mahmoud Al Zahar, also attending the funeral, said: "Today the whole people feel sick and nauseated at this crime. We call for the punishment of the perpetrators and the president of the Palestinian Authority must try these people."

A PLO spokesman said security officers were surprised to discover the gunmen in a house where they were arresting two other men. Security forces found three bombs in the room, one about to explode, he said.

But Islamic Jihad said this version of the incident was "a lie." It accused part of the Palestinian security apparatus of plotting with Israel to kill Islamic Jihad fighters.

On Saturday, preventive security head Mohammad Dahlan had the two died in the gunbattle.

Mr. Peres said that the World Economic Forum (WEF) annual meeting in Davos, a summit of 1,000 of political and business leaders.

"We were talking in exactly the same room where we met two years ago," he said. Asked to sum up the tone of his talks, he said: "A fair climate exists between us."

The two key architects of the Middle East peace process met in Davos at the start of 1994, months after the signing of an historic PLO-Israeli peace accords in Washington.

On that occasion the event was one of the first times the two leaders had appeared together since the historic handshake between Mr. Arafat and late Israeli Premier Yitzhak Rabin.

Saturday afternoon's meeting, in the Seehof Hotel five minutes from the Davos Congresshaus, came as the two men enjoyed a weekend as guests of honour of the WEF meeting.

Their mood was tangibly upbeat, with Mr. Peres telling a plenary session of the assembled luminaries that he believes a comprehensive peace in the Middle East will be concluded "before too long."

"We are now bargaining and negotiating and before too long we shall reach an agreement," he said, adding: "There is no more reason for war, and if we shall conclude our negotiations with the Syrians and the Lebanese it will be the end of war in the Middle East."

However, Mr. Peres rejected PLO claims to East Jerusalem as a dream.

"Jerusalem as you know is the capital of Israel and it is not for division or for sale," he said after his talks with Mr. Arafat.

"Mr. Arafat has the right to have his own dreams. But we told Arafat that the difference between a dream and an agreement is that for a dream it is enough to have one person, for an agreement you have to have two parties," Mr. Peres said.

Jordan and Kuwait are seen preparing to end Gulf war rift

Crown Prince and Sheikh Saad exchange messages

KUWAIT (R) — The Royal families of Kuwait and Jordan have taken a step towards healing one of the Arab World's deepest rifts by holding their first official contact for five years, diplomats said.

An exchange of messages announced on Sunday between the two countries' crown princes heralds a rapprochement that could also indirectly tighten the international isolation of Kuwait's former occupier Iraq, they said.

"It's a sign (of improving relations)," Shafiq Ghabra, Kuwait University associate professor of political science, said of the messages between Kuwaiti Crown Prince Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah Al Sabah and Crown Prince Hassan.

"The messages amount



to a step that could lead the Crown Prince of Kuwait to participate in other steps that could end with normalisation," he said.



The official Kuwait News Agency in a brief report said Sheikh Saad, who is

also prime minister, sent a cable in reply to a message sent by Prince Hassan last week.

The agency did not disclose the contents of the cables. Diplomats said the exchange was significant because Sheikh Saad had long opposed resuming ties with Arab states that Kuwait saw as having sided with Iraq during its 1990-91 occupation of Kuwait.

Kuwaiti officials last year quietly dropped a demand that "pro-Iraqi" Arab states publicly apologise for their stance as a condition for resuming ties with Kuwait.

But Sheikh Saad has often said Jordan must in some way acknowledge it

(Continued on page 7)

Islamic Jihad threatens Arafat

GAZA CITY (AFP) — Islamic Jihad militants threatened on Sunday to assassinate Palestinian President Yasser Arafat after two members of the group suspected in anti-Israeli attacks were killed by Palestinian police.

About 1,000 people attending funerals for the two killed "Arafat will cry" and "we remind you that it was the Jihad that assassinated (Anwar) Sadat," referring to the late Egyptian president.

Ayman Kazania and Amar Al Harash, both 28, were killed Saturday by plainclothes Palestinian security agents in a house in the Shati refugee camp of Gaza City.

The men were wanted by Israeli authorities in connection with a 1995 suicide bombing that killed 21 Israelis, Israeli officials said Sunday.

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Christopher is carrying financial incentives for Syria, report says

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher is expected to announce an international financing package for regional projects in hopes of prodig Syria to accelerate peace talks with Israel, an Israeli newspaper reported Sunday.

The package, to be supported by the United States, Europe and Japan, will fund Syrian-Lebanese-Israeli and Syrian-Israeli projects, Davar said. It is intended to draw Syria and Lebanon into multilateral peace talks that deal with regional issues, it added.

Mr. Christopher was scheduled to arrive in Israel late Sunday for the latest in a series of shuttles between

Israel and Syria. Israel-Syria talks, which resumed at the Wye Plantation in Maryland in December after a six-month hiatus, appear far from a breakthrough.

Israel has yet to satisfy Syria's demand that it declare willingness to withdraw from the Golan Heights, occupied in 1967. Damascus, meanwhile, appears cool to Israel's idea of warm economic and political relations in peacetime.

Syria said meanwhile it was not concerned about speculation on early Israeli elections and that it was not in a hurry to make peace which did not meet its conditions.

Syria's official press also

urged Mr. Christopher to persuade Israel accept equal and balanced security arrangements and full withdrawal from the Golan Heights.

"Talk about early elections" or maintaining the current Israeli situation is an issue which does not concern Syria in all circumstances," the official daily Al Baath said.

"We are not in a hurry and we will wait because progress or failure should be the responsibility of Israel," said another daily, Al Thawra.

"The U.S. is urged to persuade Israel to commit itself to the requirements of peace, mainly the full withdrawal and the equal and balanced security arrangements."

Israel braces for May polls

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israel girded Sunday for elections of a new parliament and prime minister as early as May after Premier Shimon Peres dispelled any lingering doubts about his intention to call snap polls.

The Labour Party leader argued in public for the first time Saturday in favour of moving up the elections scheduled for October, noting among other things that politicians in the Jewish state were already deep into campaigning.

"Everything is pushing us towards early elections," he told Israeli television. "We don't need a 10-month election campaign, but it has already begun."

Mr. Peres did not set a new date for the polls, but Labour Party officials were quoted in the Israeli press Sunday as saying they would be held on May 21.

"We need to renew our mandate in order to handle crucial issues," he said, adding that with politicians already preoccupied with campaigning the government "cannot take the necessary decisions."

In remarks on Israeli Radio Sunday, Mr. Peres insisted that the elections

would have no impact on the recently resumed Israeli-Syrian peace talks. U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher was due here late Sunday for another shuttle mission between Israel and Damascus.

"This has nothing to do with elections... whenever we have elections it may mean an interruption of the negotiations, but not an end to them," Mr. Peres said.

Officials of the main conservative opposition party, Likud, welcomed any move to advance the polls.

"We can only be happy with an end to the current legislature because with every passing day the government does something else to hurt Israel," a leading Likud figure, Dan Meridor, told Israeli Radio Sunday.

Only two small parties, the orthodox Jewish Shas and the communist Hadash, have come out against snap elections, but they have only eight seats in the 120-seat parliament, or Knesset.

By moving up the elections, Mr. Peres hopes to profit from the healthy lead in opinion polls enjoyed by the Labour Party since his predecessor, Yitzhak Rabin,

was assassinated in November by a right-wing Jewish extremist.

According to the latest survey published Friday, Mr. Peres would receive 46 per cent of the vote in a prime ministerial race against Likud leader Benjamin Netanyahu, who would garner 30 per cent.

In the legislative elections, Labour would win 48 seats in the Knesset, four more than it now holds, while Likud would garner 37 seats.

The right-wing has been hard hit not only by the Rabin assassination but by its past opposition to the Labour government's peace agreements with the Palestinian National Authority (PNA).

The party remains deeply divided over whether or not to acknowledge Palestinian autonomy on the West Bank and Gaza Strip, although opinion polls show that even 60 per cent of Likud voters approved the autonomy deals.

The Likud leadership was scheduled to hold a new debate on the issue late Sunday.

By moving the election date up, the Labour Party also hopes to benefit from the current relative calm on the Palestinian front.

Missing Muslims dead, Serb official tells U.N. investigator

BRATUNAC (AFP) — Several thousand Bosnian Muslims missing since rebel Serbs overran the U.N.-designated enclave of Srebrenica last July are dead, U.N. Rapporteur for Human Rights Elisabeth Rehn said here Sunday.

Ms. Rehn said she had been informed by a Serb official in the region, Miroslav Deronik, that the Muslims, numbered at between 3,000 and 8,000 according to different estimates, had been "killed in battle" and were "buried around (the Srebrenica region)."

She was speaking to reporters after paying a visit to the former enclave, now in Serb hands, where she spent two hours questioning Mr. Deronik extensively on the thousands of missing Muslims, exclusively male.

The men, held to be of fighting age, were rounded up and are believed to have been massacred after the collapse of the enclave on July 11.

Ms. Rehn stressed, however, that Mr. Deronik did not confirm that massacres had taken place, or admit the existence of mass graves.

The rapporteur, who arrived in Bosnia on Saturday, later set off towards a desolate mountain site to look for mass graves.

International organisations say up to 8,000 people have been missing since the Serbs moved into the enclave.

Washington has issued photographs taken by spy satellites which it says show mass graves in the area.

The United Nations said meanwhile it will establish a multilateral commission to investigate the problem of missing persons following the war in ex-Yugoslavia.

The U.N. "decided to concentrate new efforts on the creation of a multilateral commission which will in charge of missing persons," declared a U.N. expert on the missing persons file, Manfred Nowak, in Zagreb.

He said the commission would be made up of official representatives from Croatia,

Serbia-Montenegro, and the two entities formed in post-war Bosnia, the Croat-Muslim Bosnian federation and Bosnian Serb Republic.

NATO Secretary-General Javier Solana said Sunday that the formerly warring parties in Bosnia-Herzegovina had fulfilled their obligation to withdraw from territories under the Dayton peace accords.

Asked by AFP if they had fulfilled their requirement to withdraw by the 45th day of the NATO mission, which fell at midnight Saturday, Mr. Solana said "Yes."

"The news I have as of now is yes," he said, explaining that he expected to receive a final report from the command of the NATO-led international force within the coming hours, but that "the information I have is a positive one."

In Tuzla, the U.S. contingent in Bosnia honoured an American soldier killed in a mine blast with a simple ceremony.

Charles to pay \$10m for Diana's homes — paper

LONDON (R) — Prince Charles has agreed to spend as much as £7 million (\$10.5 million) for town and country homes as part of a divorce settlement with his estranged wife Princess Diana, the Mail On Sunday newspaper reported. It said Prince Charles, heir to the British throne, had agreed to personally bear the cost of a £6 million (\$9 million) house in London and a £1 million (\$1.5 million) country retreat for Princess Diana. It quoted a "royal source" as saying Princess Diana, who currently resides in London's Kensington Palace, had driven a hard bargain in negotiations over a divorce settlement. Prince Charles and Princess Diana separated in 1992 and newspapers have reported in recent weeks that Prince Charles's mother, Queen Elizabeth, has ordered them to divorce. Princess Diana said in a controversial television interview last autumn that she would not seek a divorce but would leave the matter up to Prince Charles.

Reagan to miss his 85th birthday party

LOS ANGELES (R) — Beverly Hills will celebrate a birthday with a party Tuesday featuring a who's who of the Hollywood and Washington power elite — but the guest of honour will not be there. Ronald Reagan, 40th president of the United States and victim of Alzheimer's disease, regrets he will be unable to celebrate his 85th birthday. His wife, Nancy, will attend the bash at the former actor's favourite Hollywood restaurant, Chasen's, which closed last year but is opening once more Tuesday for Reagan's birthday. But there will be no birthday cake. Without her husband on hand to blow out the candles, Mrs. Reagan thinks it just would not be the same. Among the guests will be former President Gerald Ford and his wife Betty, former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Colin Powell and California Governor Pete Wilson. Chasen's has long been an important site in Reagan lore, said to be the place where Ronald Reagan proposed to Nancy Davis, an aspiring MGM starlet. After they married in 1952, Mr. Reagan was drawn into political activity — first as president of the Screen Actors Guild. In the following years, Mr. Reagan turned full circle from liberal to conservative, becoming governor of California from 1967-74 and reaching the pinnacle in 1980, when as Republican challenger to Jimmy Carter, he was elected to the White House.

U.K. company finds first 'Windows 95' virus

LONDON (R) — A British software company has found the first virus specifically designed to infect Microsoft Corp's Windows 95 operating system, a Sunday newspaper reported. The virus, called "boza", corrupts programmes so they no longer work properly, the Independent On Sunday reported. It occasionally throws up a message reading: "The taste of fame just got tastier. Vlad Australia does it again with the world's first Wwin95 virus," the newspaper said. The report did not explain what the message meant. "It's the first that we've seen that affects Windows 95 programmes in particular," Paul Ducklin, an analyst for Abingdon, England-based software company Sophos,

COLUMN

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